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THE  
MESSAGE AND MINISTRATIONS  
OF  
DEWAN BAHADUR  
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WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NOTE,  
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*R. V. D. D. D.*  
*R. V. D. D. D.*





UNTO  
THE DEEPLY-HONOURED  
MEMORY  
OF  
MY EVER-TRUSTED  
'NAYAKA',

RAO BAHADUR  
K. V. PANTULU GARU. .





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*Om !*

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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ONE more gladdening birth-day, by the grace of God ; and with it, one other commemorative volume to take its proper place beside the two precious ones preceding it ! The full measure of expectation realised by the second, like the first, in the highly appreciative welcome elicited from discerning circles far and near has afforded more than the necessary encouragement for the succession of a third in due course. And now this fresh instalment of the 'message' goes forth upon the valued old task of 'ministration', thought-compelling and soul-vivifying, thus (be it hoped) to prepare the way for yet another annual enrichment of the largess of our legacy.

Some idea of the manifold and unstinted tribute of recognition accorded to the volume

presented this auspicious day last year, may be gathered from a few stray extracts out of a large number of acknowledgment letters and reviews. Well may the place of priority among these be given, as before, to the renewed testimony and benediction of the venerable Rev. Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter of Oxford, as near to the Indian Theistic Church in warm-hearted sympathy as he stands high in well-merited renown in the world of theology. Referring to "your beloved Dewan Bahadur", he is "happy.....to learn that he is still with you to exercise the genial influence of beautiful and honoured age". As to the varied contents of the volume, he specifically observes, "The addresses on behalf of Social Purity and the elevated respect due to Woman are of great value. They make the loftiest appeal and should be circulated as widely as possible"; and about the Prayers, he adds, "There is so warm and rich a sense of the Heavenly Presence with all its varieties of grace, so glowing a gratitude for the wonders of existence and all the affections

and hopes which life inspires, that they must confirm the faith of all who read them. May the influence of his teaching be spread far and wide by this fresh collection of his uplifting words!" *The Inquirer* of London, that eminent organ of free faith and fellowship which previously recorded its "grateful recognition" of the "lofty religious tone and high intellectual value," "the nobility of utterance and depth of spiritual fervour," of the first volume, is likewise led, by the distinctive features of the second, particularly to "emphasise the eminently practical appeal for moral and social reform that this great Indian teacher has persistently addressed to his countrymen and most of all to the young, during his long and fruitful career." Among the journals of Calcutta, *The Modern Review* delights to find the volume equally "edifying and inspiring" with its predecessor. *The World and the New Dispensation* is struck with the "chaste and classic" quality of the style and the "blend of the scholar and the devotee" in the author, as also "his touch

with all classes of people and his knowledge of men and movements." In a fairly complete review of "this valuable contribution to Brahmo literature" with its teaching of universal religion "not savouring of the least sectarianism," Pundit Sitanath Tattwabhusan, through the columns of *The Indian Messenger* as on the former occasion, gives a justly authoritative appraisal of the purple patches spread throughout the work. With others he commends, in particular, the opening piece on Social Purity and the Anti-Nauch Movement as "the most thoughtful and best-written" within its own section; nay, as almost unique, in the whole literature "anywhere" upon that vital subject, by virtue of its "deep insight" and "practical wisdom" clothed in "dignified and ornate language." And of the "great helps to devotion" provided in the directly religious services out of "the depth of the adoring spirit in the soul," he prizes as "veritable gems" that on Sadhana and the Birth-day Family Service, the latter illustrating the happy standard of

“ what a domestic ceremony should be—full of sympathy,—identification, as far as possible, on the part of the minister with the family.” Nearer home, *The Hindu* of Madras notices how “ the writings are suffused by a living spirit of religion and social service and the author writes a style which possesses a rare degree of fulness and maturity.” *Justice* greets in him “ one of the foremost thinkers of India ” who, “ as a Brahmo,” (so runs the significant compliment) “ takes a very chaste and oftentimes too chaste a view of social arrangements and structures among his countrymen ”; and while praising the social indictments as “ vigorous and bold,” it observes, “ He has wise words and lofty ideals for the man and woman who can afford to get beside their normal selves a little while in thought and meditation on things that really matter.” With a lively sense of the moral and spiritual as well as the literary excellences of its other portions, *The Daily Express* heartily joins the general chorus of grateful acclaim towards the said “ forceful thesis ” as “ by



far the most outstanding feature of the compilation." So does *United India and Indian States* opine at Delhi that it "would by itself make the book a valued possession." From Masulipatam, the fruitful vineyard of an elder day, *Janmabhumi* gratefully hails the "vital drops" of the second volume with those who, having "quaffed up the nectar made available to them in the first," "must be eagerly looking for more and more of this elixir"; and classing the author among "super-souls, to be sure," it confidently prescribes the publication as a fitting companion for all Degree-seekers in the "University of Life." As for individual witness, so worthy a votary of the hoary Hindu faith as Sir T. V. Seshagiri Aiyar is prepared freely to identify the Brahmo teaching in the book with the essence of Higher Hinduism, as he thus concludes his discerning note: "Your messages and discourses ought to open the eyes of the youths of the country to the realities of our religion and to the noxious character of many of the observances which hide the precious truth within.

It was with genuine pleasure that I perused your book." Likewise, writing in acknowledgment to their esteemed friend, the Maharajah Saheb of Pithapuram, two good representatives of the healthful Christian Clergy across the waters express themselves with the same sympathy, and soundness of judgment. Says Dr. Rosslyn Bruce of Sussex: "I am very sincerely touched by the very beautiful work which you have so kindly sent to me. The addresses are so human and so living that they cannot but be based on the only solid rock of eternal truth: and the religion in them is identical with ours." And the Rev. A. J. Skinner, himself the Head of a Public School at Marlow, shrewdly observes of the author, "He must have been a very wonderful man, and gifted with a great insight into the inner workings of a boy's mind. I feel sure, also, that you yourself must have stimulated him, or at least encouraged him in his plan of education."

Votive wreaths of 'stintless admiration like these, richly and variously woven round last year's volume in like manner

with its predecessor of the Jubilee year, may, quite characteristically as ever, make the noble-spirited author (in his own unaffected words) "tremble—I had said, shudder—when I reflect of what fragile creature such generous things are being said" and "feel as though 'a pious fraud' is being practised, be it ever so unwittingly." Yet, while the extremity of meek modesty only lends added lustre to the laurels, they serve, indeed, to prove the breadth and depth of dispassionate recognition. They help also to point out the common, unmistakable elements of real worth and worthiness in the magic pen and the wizard tongue, the acute mind and the noble heart, the devout soul and the consecrated life. And here they are set forth at length, even as they go further to obviate, by other and truly competent estimates, the editorial task of evaluating, while providing, the wares of this succeeding volume. To this treasure-trove also may as well be appropriated every particle of the glowing tributes already called forth. The same tact and taste, the same elegance and

eloquence, the same flavour and fragrance, the same aura and aroma, the same insight and inspiration as before may be found to prevail. The same dominant note of intense and yet ever self-dissatisfied spiritual 'realisation' may be heard to sound the higher strains of that self-surrender which, as the closing article in the first section here puts it, feels "an existence separate from God is insufferably oppressive." What difference in emphasis and expression is perceptible between this and the two former issues consists not in the spirit or in the stand-point but arises chiefly out of the subjects and the surroundings. The four main sections, of course, continue in regard to the selection and classification of contents. But, subject to the exigencies of the material available each time, the scope of the opening volume has come to be, in the main, religious; the Social Purity and allied themes in the next give it a preponderance of ethical colour; while, again, in the third, with its College Addresses, Council Speeches, the Adi-An-dhra and Anti-Non-Co-operation Addresses

and the Vidyasagar and Viresalingam Appreciations, it is the educational and social (or socio-political) interests that bulk largest, thus leaving open the range of its yet-to-be successor mostly for literary discourses and dissertations. Hence, as to the compilation in hand, the controversial, if not trite, nature of some of the topics as well as the mixed character of the audiences must enter into a consideration of the tone and the treatment. Even within these limits, one or two remarkable features cannot fail to impress themselves. Firstly, there is the serene, self-possessed dignity of the utterance ever and exclusively in the light of the ethical and spiritual bearings of the issues involved. Yes; light, not heat, albeit on burning topics and in a heated atmosphere: quite the sublime, not the stale view; always the suggestive, not the self-asserting vein; just the appealing, not the accusing accent; only the strong, not the sour word—altogether an immediate object-lesson in entire freedom from that spirit of intolerance which comes in for exposure in the

second of the articles in this volume, a piece which may profitably be studied along with its positive pendant on 'Toleration' among the 'Meditations'. What wonder if such pronouncements of "humane catholicity" from "a level head over square shoulders" should have uniformly challenged singular attention and respect on the floor of the Council Chamber? Secondly, the Heavenward hanker of the mystic spirit does not force it away into the purely speculative or sentimental detachment of the ascetic and the anchorite, but only invigorates it with the dynamic and hallows it with the afflatus of the patriot and the reformer for the practical problems of home and society. The religion that nurtures the life of God in the genial soul within strives, also and thereby, to radiate the glory of God through a regenerate humanity without. The Presence that informs is likewise the Power that impels.

A word or two, though necessarily brief, may next be given to introduce each item or sub-group of items included in the pages to follow. The Madras University Convocation

Address of 1923, which 'leads' the opening section, has effectually stolen a march upon most of its forerunners and is bound to shine out resplendent in the annals of that august Body as a golden classic at once more than worthy of the occasion and possessed of more than occasional worth. Delivered as from "a Pisgah-height vision of that Promised Land towards which, in humble imitation of shining exemplars, he has striven in his day to direct a succession of pilgrim steps"; and listened to with reverent rapture amidst phenomenal silence by the vast assemblage of "the latest—the freshest and brightest—jewels of the motherland, the youngest and, therefore, the dearest of the daughters and sons of *Bharatamata*," this memorable message of felicitation and counsel was *feted* at the time with an unbroken peal of harmonious plaudits by all the Dailies of the Presidency. If precision, however, so demand it, then may be permitted a passing reference, by way of exception, to solitary *Swarajya's* 'scrannel pipe' upon embittered lips. As against the self-betrayed mendacity of that

oracle strangely failing to detect in the Address little more than "a mass of pompous verbiage" and "an accumulation of meaningless platitudes" "singularly devoid of the stuff that creates moral enthusiasm or the noble call to idealism which inspires young minds", the master-piece may safely be trusted to come to its own in the freer judgment of the wider public whom it is now to reach. And thus may be ratified its unclouded approbation by all other responsible organs of the Indian Press—that is, as "excellent" and "attuned to a loftiness of outlook", according to *The Hindu*; "above the ordinary run," in the opinion of *The Daily Express*; "a message of inspiration," as adjudged by *New India*; and "an eloquent plea for reason and action" that "transcends the ordinary level of common thought and breathes of the true spirit of the prophet and seer," in the view of *Justice*. The discourse sets forth a vivid exposition of the solemn significance of the graduation ceremony of the hood and the gown, the pledge and the diploma. It also lays strenuous



insistence upon imperative measures of educational reform like the development of 'university centres' on the linguistic basis in outlying areas, "a broad and well-laid scheme of wide-spread Vernacular education," the stimulation of higher technical training for the dissolution of "academic untouchability" between intellectual aptitudes and industrial skill, and "a liberal-spirited scheme of moral instruction." But apart from these immediate concerns, it stands assured of permanent validity as clearly embodying the Two Tables of the Law unto the supreme end of self-realisation in "the glorious work of national renaissance": namely, Culture (*vidya* matured into *viveka*, *viveka* sublimated into *vigjnana*, *vigjnana* mellowed into *vinaya*) and Duty (the instrument of Discipline, the pillar of Development, the fountain of Delight). Next, a trio of religious essays—the first from the *Sathyasamrardhani* of Rajahmundry and the other two from *The Fellow-Worker* of Madras—though belonging to the earlier years yet with great force and

in lucid language, sets out the diverse varieties, the subtle sources, the baleful results and the effective solvents, on the one hand, of "man's injury to brother-man in the name of religion" and, on the other, of man's degradation of God the Formless into the grossness of "a materialised or 'symbolised' deity"; and, furthermore, the limitations of well-meant make-shifts and half-measures towards reformation, as also of conformity to custom on principle, so-called, in disregard of conviction. The two College Addresses will be specially welcome to loving 'old boys' and respectful ex-colleagues, to the trustful co-administrators and the "passionate and yet dispassionate" patron, as the preserved record of a lofty outlook upon the educational mission of an accredited institution honoured and enriched with close upon a decade-and-a-half of presiding beneficence under the sweetest, the most sanctified, of relations evermore and all-round. Of these singularly cherished sentiments, the strongest finds grateful expression in words which must here be reinscribed to be

graven upon reverent hearts. "The richest reward of my life-work has always been the affection and regard of my pupils. That, indeed, has been the most valuable asset of my life, as it has been also the most powerful stimulus in my work." Then, the eight speeches of the first triennium of the Reformed Provincial Legislature reveal, as from an elevated summit, the fulness of many-sided sympathy and far-sighted statesmanship on certain vital issues of the country's progress. They show the true, 'liberal'- 'national' educationist in the pointed indication of grave defects, tending to out-of-date effeteness, in the courses and control of Public Instruction even as a 'transferred subject'; and in the warm acceptance of the programme of free and compulsory elementary education of a practical type under an improved class of teachers with the temple-offerings of piety, rightly usable for "the noblest of charities"; and, again, in the strong opposition to any financial interdict upon wholesome religious teaching under missionary auspices. They show the

chivalrous champion of the claims of women for political enfranchisement with due regard to the essential modicum of literacy and the existing difficulties of the *purdah*. They show the uncompromising temperance (why, total abstinence) reformer—that ‘other self’ of the lifelong purity worker—in the righteous protestation against the high licensing system of excise for the up-keep of the largest source of State income. They show the disinterested “citizen” and “social reformer” in the judicious advocacy of an adequate proportional representation in the services to secure an all-round national, in place of a “sporadic, spasmodic, individual and sectional efficiency”, and to stimulate the equal advancement of the masses with the classes. They show, too, the earnest spokesman of the cause of the ‘depressed classes’ in the tender appeal for a separate Department and for differential treatment in their behalf even by way of just reparation for centuries of neglect, if not of oppression. A fuller treatment of the different phases of this last-named problem of the

Adi-Andhras on the part of their chosen representative in the counsels of the nation, is what is furnished in the latter of the next two Presidential Addresses—that delivered to the members of the community itself at their first District Conference with the genuine assurance, “I always endeavour to think and feel that I am one of you,” while gently exhorting them, among other things, to the “prime duty of self-help” in manfully yet meekly struggling to take their legitimate position in the great Indian nation by first lifting away the dead-weight of “crushing disabilities,” internal as well as external. The other Presidential Speech—that at the Anti-Non-Co-operation Conference in Godavari—endeavours “to speak the right word in due season” by a searching examination of the ulterior aim and the favourite methods, the practical applications and the significant omissions (“unobscured by any of the misleading incidents”) of a movement under, if not by, which “much avoidable harm—no doubt, intermingled with some desirable good—has been worked.” A reasoned ‘con-

fession' of political 'faith' in refreshing language, it seeks, in a spirit of more than political faith, "to pluck consolation and even hope from our sorrows and to sight the vision of a renaissance even through the gloom of despondence," by tracing "how the prospects are not so gloomy and circumstances so irremediable." "In all frankness and in all friendliness" and out of a firm belief in the 'providential' alliance of England and India, it reminds the rulers how the "crisis" came, "the period of guardianship and tutelage having been prolonged beyond the natural limits"; and impresses upon the ruled "how, the age of autocracy gone, the age of democracy can be saved from confusion and disruption only by a vigorous cultivation of the habit of mutual help and conscious co-operation on the basis of perfect equality." Such, we are led to understand, are the moorings of "the true moderate," happily defined as one "who knows how to labour and to wait, who delights to do his duty and trusts to his partner's good-will to do his, who is loyal from a sense of the right

and co-operates for the sake of general weal, who realises that raw haste is half-sister to delay, and who scorns to snatch an unfair opportunity." The crowning article in the first section stands by itself in more senses than one; and the reflective, reverent-spirited inquirer will suffer from no qualms in applying to itself its own commendation of the universal and all-potent practice of Prayer as a "pathway to that Realm of Realities" which is to be reached by the treble ascent of revelation, regeneration and realisation.

Close upon this, to pass on to the ten 'bounties and benedictions' commencing with those of New Year's Day and casketed within the two central sections of the volume—that is, verily, to advance far upon the "Realm of Realities." The daintiest and most nutritive delicacies of the tongue are ever for delectation and digestion, not for dissection and disquisition. No more is the heavenly manna of the soul for analysis but for assimilation. 'Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.' So be it here with these new model 'Psalms

by an Indian Theist ' of the day unto whom every day with its round of rites, ordinary or occasional, *nithya* or *naimitthika*—whether new year's day or wedding-day, birth-day or 'naming'-day, love-feast day or bereavement-day, conference-day or congregation-day, working-day or holiday—is nothing if not supremely 'sacramental' as in the Saints' Calendar! In the apt, expressive words, once again, of Dr. Estlin Carpenter, "so warm and rich a sense of the Heavenly Presence with all its varieties of grace, so glowing a gratitude for the wonders of existence and all the affections and hopes which life inspires!" Aye, all the spontaneous outflow, all the variegated wealth, all the beauteous brightness of human language, though in an alien tongue, remarkably laid under contribution and rendered up for responsive 'converse' with High Heaven. And then, the transporting experience of oneness *with* God confirming and consecrating the endearing emotion of oneness *in* God; so that, as has been remarked, the minister is seen self-identified, not alone with the



members of the worshipping family, but with one and all among the spirits of the adoring congregation!

The fourth and closing section of half-a-dozen sketches, long and short, biographical or psychological, brings into full view an illustrious triad of fadeless luminaries in the firmament of India. As may readily be noticed, even the 'prentice-hand' of well-nigh two score years ago indited the pledge of its own future perfection, while at work upon the first of these, the earliest of the compositions in the whole volume. In all the portraits alike, familiar features will be found lit up with the newer light of apposite anecdote and lively humour; and the inmost core of 'the seeds of god-like power' in 'bards, saints, heroes' will also be seen rightly located in each case with in-seeing sympathy. Altogether; they will, as before, enlist interest and command value as evidences of 'the word made flesh'—every one of these subjects of study an object-lesson in those principles and ideals of faith and forbearance, culture and duty, love and

service, which receive such beautiful exposition through the rest of the volume. The great man, of course, is a great man 'at all points'. And what is already common knowledge will here be borne in once more upon the reader, namely, how much there is in common, especially as between the last two before us—types, both, of ancient virtue, worth and valour; patterns, both, of plain living, high thinking and noble doing; models, both, of peerless pre-eminence in the world of 'deeds' as of 'letters'—whom we would fondly denote by the familiar epitomes of their respective lives as Dayasagar and Hithakari. Nevertheless, the system of broad categories would, not inaptly, distinguish the members of this brilliant 'belt of Orion' as Tukaram the Saint, Vidyasagar the Philanthropist and Viresalingam the Hero. Nor should it be wide of the mark to hold that these 'appreciations' will tend to deepen the conclusion—

Three worthies in three not far distant or  
different ages born,

Maharashtra, Vanga and Andhra did  
adorn ;

The first in loftiness of faith surpassed,  
The next in majesty of love, in both the  
last.

And what more becoming than that a  
volume so resonant with the echo of  
Viresalingam's clarion-call to Duty should  
embody the reverent finish of an edifying  
tribute of appreciative reminiscence under  
that beloved name and, furthermore, 'dedi-  
cate' itself "unto the deeply-honoured  
memory" of that "ever-trusted *nayaka*"?  
Jove nods to Jove ; deep answers unto deep ;  
and ours be the holy inheritance of this  
heart-homage from the "centre" of "the  
Brahmaism of regeneration" to that of "the  
Brahmaism of reformation" out of the very  
profundity of soul-communion !

It will not be out of place, at this point, to  
fix a moment's pleasurable attention upon one  
notable event of deep-felt and wide-extended  
interest within the interval between this and  
the last volume. As the still-preceding year

had witnessed the bestowal of the Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal among its New Year's Honours, so the year happily rung out this day along the Master's 'pilgrimage' brought, on the King-Emperor's Birth-day, the royal recognition of a Knighthood for the first time, all the country over, unto a non-official educationist pure and simple, himself a very primrose for modesty self-screened from public gaze. The unique distinction, only reaffirmatory as regards Nature's own 'born knight' in the higher, fuller signification of the term, was, at the time, doubly commended in *The Madras Mail* with the fitting reference, "In the Maharajah of Pithapuram he met with an enthusiastic patron who seconded his efforts especially where work connected with Social Reform was concerned, so that it might in one sense be said that the further recognition now of his work is shared to some extent by the Maharajah of Pithapuram as well." It naturally evoked a cordial expression of general satisfaction that the right had come to the right, from Maharajahs and Rajahs, Governors

and high officials, noblemen and newspaper editors, friends and co-educationists, fellow-believers and old pupils—the tokens from these last being alike rendered and received with a warmth and tenderness all their own. A slender bouquet of sample flowers from the richness of the stalk will suffice to shed its perfume upon these pages. “None ever deserved the distinction more, for you have always set a wonderful example in life to all around you.” “I need hardly say what a pleasure it is to me to see my old colleague in the Madras Council thus honoured, one from whom I derived so much of help and whose advice was ever sound.” “It is not often that the Government honours a non-official of your sturdy independence of character.” “You may not have anticipated it, you may not relish it now that it has come, but it is the common property of all who love, honour and reverence you, and they at any rate will enjoy it without stint.” “A noble soul cannot escape recognition, however much it may try to avoid it.” “The present honour is

very greatly appreciated by us as appropriately indicating your noble aims and ideals in public life. In private life we have always been struck with your singular devotion and piety and have regarded you as a saint." "I am sure that a Knighthood has, in recent times, never been bestowed on a more generous heart." "Your good blade may not carve the casques of men, your tough lance may not thrust sure; but your strength is as the strength of ten, because your heart is pure." "The whole teaching profession, of which you have been a shining ornament, will be proud of your achievement and success as an educationist and public worker." "Had the Government done this duty a year earlier, you would have had the privilege of enjoying a far greater pleasure than this in addition—that of receiving the sincerest felicitations of the one great soul to whom this would have been veritably a personal honour. At present you will have to be contented with the knowledge that the *alumni* of the (Christian) College are extremely gratified at the Government's recognition

of your merits". "You have ever been pleased to associate your manifold honours with your relation to this (Pittapur Rajah's) College, as you have also consecrated your conspicuous gifts of head and heart to its expansion. We, too, on our side, have learnt to delight in the loving and enduring nature of that valued relationship." "A special honour to the Brahmo community." "Bombay and Bengal could count Knights amongst Brahmos, and now Madras has you, amongst them." "A rare honour which, I believe, has been but honoured by your association with it. It becomes to us a matter of family pride and joy." "This honour, exalted as it is, is nothing compared to the very high esteem and sincere love they (your pupils and friends) bear for you." And what is the sequel? Before the eye of man, an immediate response of grateful acknowledgment to every individual greeting. But at the Altar of the Unseen, only the writhing cry of self-abasement under its own revaluation of values! "Thou art the witness to, Thou art the Judge of, all the pain and anguish

this heart has been feeling these several days—even the pain and anguish that, while the world is led or misled into the notion of worth and virtue, there is the ceaseless, the unquenchable, hell-fire, in the heart, of separation from Thee and the aching feeling, the tormenting sense, of the loneliness born of that separation !” (P. 347.)

Thus, honour without exalting the honourable within, and the honourable within humbling itself before the honour without—thus, full of years as of honours,

‘Till old experience do attain ,  
To something like prophetic strain—’

may this, our own ‘good man of God,’ thrive, by His grace, through the round of many a benignant birth-day, thus to yield us the growing fruit of his goodness and godliness ! And for the time being, aye, ‘thro’ all the secular to-be,’ may this present store of refined reflections and reverential rhapsodies, with their fresh charm of revision by that finishing touch which touches nothing it adorns not, usher its peaceful way into all



xxx

hands and hearts, that so their 'fulfilled'  
lives may prove how

'The tidal wave of deeper souls  
Into our inmost being rolls'!

COCANADA, }  
*Maharnavami*, } V. RAMAKRISHNA RAO.  
6—10—1924. }

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ADDRESSES  
AND  
ARTICLES.



I  
CONVOCATION ADDRESS,  
University of Madras :  
CULTURE AND DUTY.  
(1923)

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MY LORD THE CHANCELLOR AND OTHER  
MEMBERS OF THE SENATE, AND GRADUATES OF  
THE YEAR :

The privilege of addressing—of felicitating and counselling—the graduates of the year I owe entirely to the favor of the Chancellor; to whom I beg to tender my humble thanks. The honor of the position, it is obvious, consists essentially in a highly responsible task; from which, if merit were the main test, I should instantly shrink. For it is a task the difficulty of which—from the double dearth of new subjects and of fresh forms for familiar themes—has been repeatedly owned by those admittedly my superiors in learning and experience. Yet

an impressive ceremonial affecting so large an assemblage of the choice youth of the land cannot but be intensely grateful to the heart of an old school-master, especially an Indian school-master. To him, as he nears the close of the working-period of life, this solemn scene is as a Pisgah-height vision of that Promised Land towards which, in humble imitation of shining exemplars, he has striven in his day to direct a succession of pilgrim steps. To the sight this is a joy; to the spirit, a benediction.

Another introductory word may recall the sublime sentiment shared in by all leading faiths that where even a few congregate for a worthy object, the Eternal Witness is unfailingly present to inspire and to bless. If there be some real significance in the myth which traces the genesis of learning to a striking incident in the self-manifestation of the Supreme, an occasion on which hundreds of ardent lives, with a promising future before them, are to be consecrated to the noble ends of culture and character, ought to be solemnised by the felt presence of the

Parent of light and life. May we, while we are here, think and feel as under that pure, all-witnessing Eye !

A distinguished predecessor of mine in this position concluded his learned discourse with the world-renowned name of one whom he judged to be ' the greatest man ' of the nineteenth century—' one who combined in himself more of the rich characteristics of greatness than were to be found in any other man of his time '—' the great and good ' Master of Rugby. It becomes my sacred, if melancholy, duty to open my humble address with the widely respected name of one who has been frequently styled the Arnold of India. On the 15th of July of this year terminated a career which close study and correct appreciation can designate by only one word, ' glorious.' The ideals which inspired that life, the principles which governed it, the vigour and devotion which characterised it, the activities which engaged it, the beneficence which resulted from it, the affection and reverence which were elicited by it, have imparted to that life the

significance of a dispensation of Providence. The University is indebted to the Rev. Dr. William Miller for work which, estimated by the period over which it extended, by the directions in which it ramified, by the ends which it sought to achieve, by the results which it helped to realise, will, I feel assured, be universally acknowledged as the richest contribution made by any single person to the growing usefulness of our *Alma Mater*. With all the might of keen fore-sight, broad sympathy and wide experience, he strove to enlarge the influence of this University upon its Affiliated Collegès so as to augment their usefulness as centres of liberal education. It were far from easy to calculate in terms of ordinary computations the full value of the monumental work he could achieve as the presiding genius of that splendid Institution whose history, during nearly two generations, may be interpreted as his own concretised autobiography. But one fact is clear: with the cordial co-operation of devoted co-workers, who always accepted him as their guide and pattern, he replenished the entire South Indian community with the rich asset

of successive bands of well-educated and carefully-trained members, whom precept and example would inspire to a life of industry and integrity, fidelity and sympathy. Services of this high order and large magnitude justly entitled him to be designated, in one of the previous Convocation Addresses, "the *doyen* of the Madras University and Madras education". But immeasurably richer than the work is the gift to humanity of the model life exemplified by this prince among men. It is a life which, in the phrase dear to our hearts in this land, may be named *Dhanya jeevana*: the blessed life, a life abundant in the blessings of grace. It is a life illustrative of the sage words of one of the broadest-minded and finest-souled thinkers of our day: "the good, the absolutely good, is eternally working itself out in the world"; and it is man's prerogative "to feel himself infinite in his finitude, to learn to accept his closely bounded life and task as the process in which the side of him that is touched by infinity becomes real, to be aware of the immanence of the Divine in the humblest and saddest consciousness." Dedi-



cated to an end that surmounts the bounds of time and sense, refined and expanded through a strenuous course of self-liberation—ever-taxing and yet ever re-assuring, the pilgrim is led on to an illumination that visions the divine harmony which, like the calm above the storm, prevails eternally through the hankerings and strivings of the work-a-day world. ‘The numbing cloud mounts off the soul’; the whole being is filled with undimmed light and unmixed sweetness; the full current of life is set, free and pure, to noble ends. The message of this emancipated and illumined life may, in some measure, be summed up in the master’s own words: the ideal life, for every man as for every nation, is the life of service; and service and subordination are the life of the Universe, isolation and selfishness, its death. To the graduates of the year I can offer no happier felicitation than the benediction of his spirit, and I can address no loftier exhortation than the counsel to follow the guiding signal of his life. Before I pass from this subject, might I bespeak your very calm and deep consideration, as befitting persons of

culture, to one observation made by this great teacher ? Does it not furnish food for reflection to one and all of us, when Dr. Miller, with his profound knowledge of history, confidently asserts that “the partnership between India and Britain is the appointed channel through which the influences tending towards the complete unification of humanity are to flow” ? Dr. Miller was the bearer of this great message of confidence, goodwill and co-operation—of light, love and life—from the heart of Britain to the heart of India.

An expression of deep regret is due to another great loss of the year. Eminent in position, widely respected in society for simplicity of ways, sobriety of temper, independence of spirit and steadfastness of purpose, Sir K. Sreenivasa Iyengar closed his brilliant career with startling suddenness. For this University he won high credit as he rose steadily from under-graduate to Vice-Chancellor. Equally striking was the success he achieved in the larger sphere of public life; where he owed it entirely to his

solid merit that he was elevated to two of the highest offices open to an Indian in this Presidency. His whole spirit was in happy accord with the ideals of the University: and he cherished a glowing zeal for the honor of his *Alma Mater*. In his impressive Convocation Address the key-note of the exhortation was: "be true to the spirit of the student"; and how sublime was the picture he drew of that spirit! This loyalty to the spirit of the student he sought to enjoin with an austere unconcern for passing consequences. This rule of conduct explains his last noteworthy act as the Vice-Chancellor of the University, in dealing with a most unfortunate incident which saddened every thoughtful mind. 'Morality as regards study', observes Carlyle, 'is a primary consideration which overrides all others'; and the Vice-Chancellor acted in this spirit of uncompromising rectitude—a spirit which could not but be respected not only by those who disagreed with him but even by those on whom the chastisement fell. The example of this worthy life is bound to hearten many an aspirant after true distinction. In this instance also, my congratula-

tions to the graduates of the year may be formulated in the wish that to their portion in life may come some of the success which he achieved ; while my exhortation to them may find fit expression in the noble words with which he bade farewell to the graduates who had the privilege of being addressed by so distinguished a son of the University : “ speak the truth, do your duty, swerve not from the highest study”.

To these two departed worthies—each remarkable in his own way, the one an illustration of the amplest culture united to the sublimest character and the other a fine specimen of the rich fruit of University Education in this country—to these two gifted souls we render the tribute of our profound respect, even as we mark their exit from our plane of existence with keen regret. However, may there not be found something more significant than mere accident in the coincidence that these two striking personalities, so prominently connected with this University, should be translated to a brighter realm even as the Institution which lies

beholden to them for great services ungrudgingly rendered is to be ushered into a new day through the operation of the University Reorganisation Act? Who can say but that the illumining memories of the two brilliant lives have been set up as a double rainbow arch of hope to cheer the University in its fresh tasks?

The passing, in February last, of the Reorganisation Act just referred to, marks an epoch-making event in the history of the Madras University. As the first fruit of an administrative reform, whereby Education has become a "transferred subject", placed under a people's Minister, the Enactment is a welcome augury of the generous interest which this University will, in future, receive from both the Government and the community. A teaching and residential University is the very heart of higher education; and its formal establishment, after a series of preparatory developments, furnishes just occasion for much satisfaction. Through large and wholesome improvements effected partly before, and largely after, the

Universities' Act of 1904, the University had, for years, ceased to be a merely examining body. The affiliated Colleges were, in a real sense, centres of University teaching and academic life. The masterly Report of the Calcutta University Commission, which is a mine of helpful suggestions, roused thought on the subject all over the land. It also presented a carefully-designed model-scheme of University reform. And the time was thought to be ripe for the final—the definitely finishing—step being taken for creating a teaching and residential University. The policy of focussing the operations within a circumscribed area has been adopted. Exception has been taken to this method. But its practicability has been urged as its justification. The intention to extend the plan to other areas has been acknowledged in the Act. As it is, the ample character of the scheme will take several years to unfold itself in its completeness. But the prospect is bright. To all friends of liberal education the future offers rich opportunities for zealous work. A commendable feature of the scheme is the reorganised constitution.

The principle of election has been liberally applied. The bifurcation of the administrative function into executive and academic sections, each with a separate agency, is an improvement of great moment. The ideal of democracy is writ large on the reconstituted Senate, whereby that body becomes the meeting-place of all the interests and all the capacities necessary for the successful administration of a modern University. Even with the limitations to which they were subject under the old system, the Indian Universities have been appreciated as 'lasting monuments of glory which England has reared unto herself', as convincing proofs that 'England treated India as a trust from God', and as fostering nurseries of noble influences which 'are binding together the two lands and the numerous races with cords more powerful than the strength of armies and more enduring than the craft of statesmen'. May this University, as it grows under new conditions of increased resources and enhanced prestige, prove the wisest exponent of national life and the mightiest inspirer of humanity!

To a few topics relevant to this subject of educational reorganisation I shall request brief attention.

1. The status of the Mufassal Colleges, styled the Affiliated Colleges, under the new Act has been a subject of discussion. Is there any ground for the apprehension that the new scheme would tell adversely on this class of educational institutions? It has been urged that Colleges of this denomination retain an altogether unaltered, if not a somewhat improved, position in relation to the University to which they are 'affiliated. But the real issue is, how does the translation of colleges within a certain area into Constituent Colleges determine the position of the rest? Do these latter stand, as they did before, on a footing of equality with the former? Is the division of the Colleges in this Presidency into Constituent and Affiliated Colleges a distinction without a difference? Are the advantages—the special facilities and opportunities—of a teaching and residential system, of negligible educational value? Or does not the existence of these



advantages in which only one class of colleges can mostly, if not wholly, participate, place those colleges on a vantage-ground? The Council of Affiliated Colleges, whose sole function is to look to the interests of the Affiliated Colleges, will have, as its first duty, to give the most earnest attention to this question. The Act provides for the establishment of 'University Centres'. The need for their establishment is thus recognised from the very commencement of the new operations. The Affiliated Colleges can, in my humble opinion, escape deterioration mainly through the creation of such Centres of University efficiency. The Council of Affiliated Colleges should presently set about the work of investigating the situation and formulating definite proposals. A 'settled fact' has been loyally accepted; but that does not argue that the apprehensions of injury have been disproved. My esteemed friend, the Revd. Principal Meston, expects the establishment of one University, if not of more, in the regions outside the metropolis, before the close of the first quinquennium. May the expectation prove a prophecy!—2.

In his Convocation Address the Rt. Hon. M. E. Grant Duff observed that the Madras University existed in the midst of a huge Dravidian people and yet one could hardly make a guess as to what the Dravidians might do. The outside world would seem even now to be little aware of the fact that a Dravidian Culture existed. Anyhow, the imperative duty in this respect lies in the direction of a vigorous development of the study of the leading South Indian Vernaculars. The compilation of Lexicons and the conduct of philological research are good in their own way. But they are accessories; the essential is the recognition of the Vernaculars as subjects of culture and the media of instruction. Vernacular poetry, the study of which is now a very minor concern, forms, according to the people's innermost sentiment, a rich source of intellectual enlightenment and moral inspiration. The very manner in which a verse in a vernacular is recited by a pandit-educated and by a modern-educated Indian, brings out the difference—in the one case it is a chant, in the other a stammer. The Elementary

school-master is learned in many sciences, but does not feel at home in Vemana's verses; and the simple rustic asks, 'what doth it profit a man to acquire so many *sastrams* but lose the soul of poetry'? Again, by bands of earnest workers, animated by various motives, the literary prose is being developed, at least in some of the Vernaculars, into a fit vehicle for cultured thought and sentiment. But it is a task weighed down with difficulties; and it merits generous encouragement from the University as well as the public. If modern learning is to be carried to the heart of the nation, it can be done only through the Vernaculars. Without a broad and well-laid basis of widespread Vernacular education, higher culture, restricted to a few, would, for national efficiency, mean something like the dwelling-place of Duessa—a mansion on a morass.—3. A former Convocation Address noted that the claims of studies relating to the industrial life of the community had been temporarily 'waived in deference to the claims of pure learning'. But education along the lines of applied science is the

clamant need of the land. The study of science enlists zeal only when it is directed to a practical end. Material prosperity and social harmony stand guaranteed to that nation alone which vigorously promotes the intellectual development of its industrial population. At the present time there exists an estrangement between 'learning' and 'business'. Inestimable as have been the benefits of a liberal modern education, the best influences of the University have, however, been mostly confined to particular classes or communities. A feeling of 'academic untouchability' has been generated. For example, it has taken us some decades to realise the relation subsisting between the processes of irrigation and the fields to be irrigated—between Engineering and Agriculture. Similar limitations have tended to make the system lop-sided. A link of sympathy should be established between men trained in intellectual aptitudes and men trained in industrial skill. The University should steadily widen the orbit of her activities so as to stimulate technical training of a high order. Thus alone can a University

justify itself to, and command the co-operation of, all sections of the great community, amidst which it exists.—4. The last of the subjects to be considered here is that of Moral Instruction. This subject has, a short while ago, been distinctly integrated into our educational courses. A certain class of educational institutions has always been alive to this responsibility. But the community as a whole has been rather torpid as regards this duty. Our system of education has, therefore, been almost completely secular in aims and methods. But if ‘the formation and development of character is the central function’ of sound education, too much stress cannot be laid on the moral responsibilities of life. The promises demanded as a condition precedent to graduation are a testimony to the importance of this aspect of education. That all well-directed study has certain ethical tendencies may be granted. Yet, if the distinguishing mark of man is his moral sense—his susceptibility to ‘the three reverences’, direct, active, moral instruction should be a notable and noble feature of our educational system. I believe the best sec-

tion of the community will endorse and support a liberal-spirited scheme of moral instruction. It will be in harmony with the finest traditions of the land. I venture to add that morality—man's correct response to his 'temporal surroundings'—will irresistibly elevate itself to spirituality—man's correct response to his 'eternal surroundings.' And this exaltation of morality need cause no alarm. India's ultimate unity, consistently with her age-long genius, must rest on spiritual affinities. Let us only realise that sound education is a preparation for 'fulness of life.' As Bacon urges, the whole system of being should 'be thrown out altogether', as 'Nature does in forming a flower.' Thus alone the Teacher becomes the *Guru*.

Graduates of the Year, Ladies and Gentlemen: I feel grateful for the courtesy of your company in the foregoing' ramble over the field of education. This excursion were a digression but for the plea that to you, one and all, education ought always to be a subject of absorbing interest. Distant as Utopia may be the millennium when, as a certain

enthusiast has hoped, the nations of the world would conclude to lay aside politics and concentrate attention and energy on education. The truth is, however, being made increasingly clear, for all the obsessions of the passing hour, that the sovereignty of arms and armaments is short-lived, and that the future chiefly belongs to culture and character. Hence the paramount importance of all problems of educational reconstruction. It is the duty as well as the privilege of every educated person to participate, with understanding and zeal, in this glorious work of national renaissance.—Now, ladies and gentlemen, I deem it an honor as I feel it a pleasure to offer to you—to each member of this fraternity—the most cordial congratulations of the University—might I add, of this assembly and of the whole South Indian Community?—on the respective degrees which you have won through tested capacity and acknowledged merit. As the eye dwells with delight on this thrice happy sight and the heart feels braced as if by an elixir of life, the memory spontaneously recalls that charming scene where, invited by a richly-ornamented friend

to produce her jewels, a noble Roman matron introduced her beloved sons with words of the purest wisdom and love, 'these are my jewels'. You are the latest—the freshest and brightest—jewels of the motherland; the youngest and, therefore, the dearest daughters and sons of *Bharatamata*. Unto you is richly due, and is hereby heartily accorded, all the prayerful joy, all the hopeful felicitation, befitting this auspicious hour. If the true wealth of a country consists in the numerical strength and the moral soundness of the educated section, the Convocation of the University is the annual presentation of the treasure-trove of South India for the appreciation of her well-wishers. This day is your 'Day'; we rejoice with you; we render our thanks for you. The field of culture is world-wide; the domain of character is universal. To wish you well is to wish well of the whole country, indeed, of the entire race. This inspiring ceremony is significant of several noteworthy ideas and sentiments. It testifies to the lasting interest taken by the community in liberal education. It betokens the sympathy and the goodwill shown by all



thoughtful persons towards zeal for learning and eagerness for self-improvement. It evidences how you are the objects of the tenderest solicitude from all quarters. It discloses the nature and scope of that fellowship, transcending faculties and professions, which a University seeks to establish. It aims at awakening in your minds and hearts a lively sense of your responsibility to augment the stores of your own knowledge and experience by incessant industry and to dedicate your powers and opportunities to the welfare of your fellow-beings. It commemorates your reception into a vast academic brotherhood of noble aims, generous sympathies and devoted services. It celebrates your initiation into that second—the higher and holier—life of the Spirit in Wisdom, Goodness and Grace.—My first word of counsel to you, therefore, is that you value your degree at its intrinsic worth which is unquestionably high. Your degree is your testimonial that you embody in yourself a respectable measure of talent and capacity, of perseverance and industry, of self-control and self-denial. It is the witness unto your possession of a

cultivated intellect, chastened tastes, refined susceptibilities, worthy aspirations, considerate demeanour and disciplined character. The studies whereby you have qualified for the degree have 'learnt' you one supreme lesson—that the tasks of the student are in themselves enlivening and elevating, that 'labor is life' and 'labor is glory'. Those studies were designed and directed to evolve in you the true spirit of the scholar—the spirit noted for passionate quest of knowledge, cheerful submission to discipline, unswerving adherence to duty, keen appreciation of the realities of life and an inexhaustible fund of humane impulses. The 'promises' which you have had to guarantee with your honor before you could be admitted to your degree, constitute a comprehensive covenant that you would be ever alive to your obligations as an individual, as a worker, as a citizen, as a member of society, as a factor of humanity. Through these pledges you have bound yourself to eschew whatever is low and unworthy, to strive after whatever is high and honorable, to employ your talent and influence for

the diffusion of enlightenment and the propagation of virtue, to discharge with loyalty and integrity the whole round of your duties in life and to further the best interests of the community and of humanity to the utmost possibility of your opportunities. Thus, in eloquent symbol, your gown is the robe of a Dedicated Life; your hood, the badge of an ever-growing League of the Leading Light; and the diploma now handed to you, the Lamp of Learning more constant and more potent than Aladin's 'Wonderful Lamp'. These form the charter of your franchise in the Republic of Letters. By your graduation you have been admitted to the freedom of the world-wide Commonwealth of Culture. Your Degree is thus a pearl of great price. I exhort you to use it with wisdom and to wear it with honor. I wish you all the happiness of its possession.

It goes without saying that the Degree the possession of which entitles you to the esteem of all lovers of learning, has been won with incalculable pains. 'Tendrils strong as flesh and blood' intertwine the several

generations; and as Emerson teaches us, 'every man is a quotation from all his ancestors.' But how hard the task to sum up the full 'tale' of their self-denying services to posterity! However, out of a vast number, may it be permitted to a descendant of three generations of military men to dwell for a moment on one striking instance, memorable but oft-forgotten? In his brilliant Convocation Address, after a glowing tribute to the countless deeds of endurance, self-denial and heroism of the Madras Army, Col. Hughes-Hallet assured the graduates of the year, 'it is the Madras Army which has made your presence here to-day possible'. To the numerous lives laid down on the battle-field should be added the still larger number spent out in winning the victories of peace. From the humble hind who binds the sheaf or watches the reef to the exalted sage who, from the Eiffel-tower of genius, surveys the domain of knowledge, there ranges a glorious procession of good men and true who have "toiled and bled and died" that we may gain and grow and thrive. To them all we owe the pious tribute of profound esteem and deep

gratitude. Thus, as a fruit of great sacrifice your Degree has come to be yours; and as an offering of pure sacrifice alone will you be suffered to employ it. This is the true meaning of the noble precept, 'freely ye have received, freely give'. As a free gift of the self-sacrifice of the past you have received it; and, rendered richer with your reverent mite, as a free offering of the present you will pass it on.

This incidental reference to a truth of great moment—namely, that life can perpetuate itself only through renunciation, that lasting good is achieved solely through ceaseless self-surrender—demands that I should make a fervent appeal to you, with all the earnestness of a sincere well-wisher, to cleanse your minds of even the slightest taint of one misleading and injurious notion. I refer to the not uncommon notion that there exists a real antithesis, an inherent conflict, between privileges and obligations, between rights and duties. Unlike certain other pairs of words—such, for example, as light and darkness, good and evil—which name irrecon-

cilable and, therefore, mutually extinguishing antagonisms, the twin words we are now considering denote not divergences but parallels, not contraries but complements. Rights and duties are inseparable concomitants, inalienable allies. It would be a fatal mistake to think of rights as the bribe for duties or of duties as the penalty for rights. Rights and duties are two aspects of one concept, two directions of one energy, two results of one function. They form the inlet and the outlet of one fountain of life—the inlet of power and the outlet of service. Rights without duties would be an idle boast ; duties without rights, a surly growl. Rights and duties are welded into the undivided serene strength of self-realisation through self-reliance and self-expansion. Is it right or is it duty that prompts the stream to flow, the seed to grow, the bird to sing, the heart to beat ? Withhold from the heart the right to pulsate, it is numbed ; withdraw from the heart the duty to purvey, it is clogged. Nor is it irrelevant that we ponder over this fact for a moment. Our *Alma Mater* prescribes to us Culture as the supreme end of our being ;

and the distinguishing characteristic of Culture is the equipoise of Truth, which resists what the poet calls the 'falsehood of extremes'. The goal of Culture is that emancipation from the bondage of self-interest whereby every right is instinctively transformed into a duty, as in unimpaired physical life food is automatically transmuted into energy. Let rights be received as a trust and duties be accepted as a call. Then their connascent relationship in man's moral life will become manifest. Then it will be perceived that even by a divine ordinance wide-spread respect waits on unflinching self-control, and liberal privileges are invariably yoked with exacting obligations. Verily, unto whom much is given, of him much shall be required.

Thus we are brought back to the thought that for being a liberal 'pensioner on the past', every educated person must be 'indentured' as a servant of the future. This, too, is an illustration of industry claiming 'an interest in its own fruits'. Our position places each one of us under a triple

obligation—the obligation of ceaseless self-development, the obligation of disinterested service to humanity, the obligation of reverent response to ‘the Eternal Power, not ourselves, by which all things fulfil the law of their being’. These are the intellectual, moral and spiritual obligations of Culture. Genuine Culture is thus a composite of three elements—a beam commingling three rays, a strength woven of three strands. Will you be good enough to bear with me while I attempt a very short study of this very great subject?

Culture has been designated ‘the true philosopher’s stone’. The phrase is happy as an appreciation of the sublime results of self-cultivation. The actual process, however, is one of development, and not of transformation. According to Novalis, Culture aims at giving man ‘a perfect knowledge and mastery of his own self’, by rendering the human consciousness ‘its own light and its own mirror’. In other words, the object of Culture is to fit man for his noblest achievement—namely, self-realisation. In the illuminating language of the



Seer of *Santiniketan*, 'every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man'. Culture is the witness to this Divine Hope in man, in that it affirms his high destiny to enlarge towards a glorious consummation. Culture is the pilgrimage of wonder to the shrine of wisdom. The basal assumption of Culture is that the human bosom is a mine of mysterious powers. The one great end of true education is to put man in conscious possession of these powers. The first among these is perception—the capacity to see with an investigating mind. Every conscious act of man is an exercise of this power of perception—the 'dwelling' of the mind on the objects and happenings of life. Education has to steady this power by discipline and strengthen it by suggestion—that is, to develop perception into reflection, through concentration and comparison. Man thus becomes a being 'of the ruminating kind'; the essence of his existence as man is to choose, to ponder and to realise. And in order effectively to exercise this ruminating capacity, man has to limit himself, even as a stream limits itself to its banks. This is

‘concentration’ and ‘devotion’—the first illustration of ‘renunciation’. As a consequence, the human mind establishes direct contact with the realities of life. Its fruit is clear thinking, penetrating insight, balanced judgment, and, therefore, sure ground under the foot and an open view before the eye. Man is thus enabled to stand erect and to look ahead—to think clear and to see straight. Thereby he enlarges the sphere of his interest and the field of his influence. Like a widening river, he receives affluents from all sides into himself and expands. This process of self-expansion inevitably sheds the old shell of narrow self-interest. The self is drawn out of its little cell into the broad light. The head and the heart are alike illumined. Aims and considerations with a circuit ampler than individual life become the decisive factors of plan and action. The thinking man matures into the considerate man. Altruism is engendered. Knowledge, *vidya*, is widened and deepened into wisdom—that X ray of the spirit which pierces through forms and appearances to the reality of existence. This is *viveka*—the

search-light of the soul turned on the face of the world. Dark recesses are radiated ; new avenues of thought are opened out ; new springs of pure happiness are discovered. Wisdom is sublimated into illumination, *vignana*, till each single object shines as a ' theophany '—a suggestive sample of the one Eternal Idea: My meaning I may seek to elucidate with a humorous but instructive example borrowed from a well-known British journal. There is the familiar primrose. We pity the Peter Bells of the unthinking world to whom the primrose is nothing more than a yellow primrose. Out of their ignorance we have emerged into scientific knowledge: we have discovered the primrose to be a dicotyledon, and we have classified it as a rhododendron. Indeed, we have proved our practical sagacity by adopting it as the badge of a political party in the Primrose League. Nevertheless, have we been initiated into the secret of it? Why does the inspired bard name it the ' rathe primrose '? Can it be for the reason that it is the first smile of the incoming year—the messenger of resuscitated life—the bearer of the ' good tidings ' that

in nature there is no death but that 'every winter changes to spring'? Similar is the light which Culture, the Science of the Truth, casts on all the experiences of life. It is man's glory to be, as the Arabic phrase has it, *Ashraful-Makhlukhat*—the exalted one of creation, because of his inborn power to 'con' the lessons of this occult science. The cultured man is thus a person endowed with a trained and developed capacity to appreciate aright the values of events and entities in relation to the whole round of existence. He possesses what Wordsworth and, after him, Newman call 'the philosophic mind'.

The moral and social value of the man of Culture, as the efflorescence of passionless sacrifice—*viraga*, cannot but be rare. With stores of knowledge which he is to be ever ready to augment through participation with others, he is an abundant source of enlightenment. With pure motive, high moral purpose and a strong sense of duty, he is an inspiring model character. With catholic spirit, courteous bearing, humane impulses and benevolent designs, he is a 'heaven-born

harmoniser'. With clear thought, wide outlook, balanced judgment and well-directed energy, he is a powerful organiser. Braced by the vitalising conviction that 'the highest is also the most real'; refined by the chastening influences of that true humility, *vinaya*, which, like 'the fruit-laden bough', 'rests its head upon the ground'; and illumined by the savant's truth—'the laws of nature are the thoughts of God', by the sage's wisdom—'the shoe-black is Infinite', by the Seer's evangel—'among the *Daityas* I am Prahlada', he is (in Lord Haldane's noble phrase) a brother of the 'Priesthood of Humanity'.

Stated in my inadequate language, such are the content, the aim and the worth of that Culture which the University assigns to you as the supreme concern of life. It is an 'excelsior' ascent of ever-towering heights. With expanding horizons and multiplying marvels, the prospect is glorious. The enterprise is heroic in purpose and fruitful in results. It is a path adorned with the footprints of the wisest and noblest of all ages.

No traveller along this track, as a Persian poet assures us, has ever missed his way. Security and success are guaranteed of Heaven. Stout of heart and firm of foot, keep, then, to this path. The warmest benedictions of your *Alma Mater* go with you.

Before conclusion, a word of special welcome is due to the Bachelors of Agricultural Science—the pioneers, as we trust, of a steadily increasing *corps* of trained and willing workers in a field of vast possibilities. A great world-classic widely honoured in South India, defines the cultivators as ‘the pivot of the world’; and upon the intelligence and the industry of the recipients of the new Degree will largely depend the sustaining power of that pivot. This Faculty, perhaps, more than any other, demands that devotion to duty which accepts hard labour as a privilege. It will be your good fortune ‘to scatter plenty o’er a smiling land’. May yours be the joy of benevolent duties zealously discharged!—The Lady Graduates are entitled to the warmest felicitations of all friends of India. If men-graduates prove

India's cultural power, their sisters in distinction represent India's cultural glory, 'a light to young or old'. A hallowed sentiment of this land demands that the mother shall be venerated as the first—the earliest and dearest—object of worshipful esteem. To you who are the expression of 'the mother', I accord, not only the respect due to grace, but also the reverence due to sanctity. In you and the other members of the sisterhood is vested the true greatness of the nation. May you achieve your heaven-appointed mission !

To Graduates of the Year in all the Faculties I would, in conclusion, address one word with all the solemnity of the farewell moment. It is not a word new to you ; nor is it a word you will be suffered to forget. It is a word associated in the human mind with mingled feelings of awe, sadness and thankfulness—even the regnant word, *Duty*. The longer one lives and strives to be true to the purer promptings of one's nature, the more vividly is brought home to one's con-

sciousness the sovereignty of this mighty word over human life. It is, therefore, incumbent on the outgoing to offer to the in-coming generation, even as a memento of mutual good-will, some vivid though succinct account of one's deep-impressed experiences relating to this all-compelling idea.—On the subject of Duty it is not possible that I can say anything that is new. But the reiteration of a world-old ideal is a daily task, like the daily reappearance of the Sun. The precept, 'whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might', signifies that a dedicated life alone can be a useful life. The Sacred Book of Human Existence opens with the dedication—'*To Duty*'. In the estimates of Duty, there is no distinction of 'high and humble. The day's duty notes the fulfilment of the day's worship. The privilege of performing Duty is 'the only absolute Right' of man.—Of the several characteristics of Duty, reference will here be made to two. The eye of Duty is ever upon man. It is 'the Hound of Heaven' watching over him through all the windings of life. No moment, no incident, is too trivial for the purview of Duty. The



final judgment on Life is the verdict of Duty. Again, marvellous is the change of aspect in which Duty successively presents itself. It is usual to picture Duty as 'stern'; and severely stern it undoubtedly is, as it enforces fidelity. But before long, experience discovers stern duty to be stimulating purpose. Through discipline comes development. And as development expands and enriches life, duty is ultimately hailed as delight. Discipline, Development, Delight—these mark the stages in the transformation of sternness into sweetness. Duty may at first be struck out 'as the waters out of the rock'; but, in the end, Duty oozes 'as honey from the comb'. With this grace of sublimating labour into pleasure, Duty endears itself to life. Indeed, in the crowning accomplishment of man—self-realisation, life is duty, duty is life. The paramount duty enjoined by Culture is to realise the soul and surrender it to service. The supreme reward of a life devoted to Culture is the privilege to dedicate itself to love and service—that beatitude the glory of which has been

chanted in such sublime notes in that 'Lord's Lay' of our times, the *Gitanjali* :

"Life of my life, I shall ever try to keep my body pure, knowing that thy living touch is upon all my limbs.

I shall ever try to keep all untruths out from my thoughts, knowing that thou art that truth which has kindled the light of reason in my mind.

I shall ever try to drive all evils away from my heart and keep my love in flower, knowing that thou hast thy seat in the inmost shrine of my heart.

And it shall be my endeavour to reveal thee in my actions, knowing it is thy power gives me strength to act."

Graduates of the Year, such is 'the vision divine' that Culture brings into ken. Such is the heavenly gleam that shall be followed, with unaverted eye and undaunted heart, by every votary of Culture—the 'golden dream'

Of Knowledge fusing class with class,  
Of civic Hate no more to be,  
Of Love to leaven all the mass,  
Till every Soul be free'.

Ladies and Gentlemen, once again I offer to you, as Sister and Brother Graduates, the heartiest congratulations of our University. And as she bids you an affectionate farewell, our *Alma Mater* pronounces upon each one of you the benediction of the 'benign mother': Heir of the Past, Trustee of the Future, Apostle of Truth, Harbinger of Hope, may the richest gifts of Grace abide with you all your days!

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## II

### RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE :

#### ITS MAIN SOURCES.

(1891)

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Even as the corruption of the best is ever the worst—the most baleful—in consequences, it is sad to reflect that man's injury to brother-man, in the name of religion, has been more unrelenting in spirit and more anguishing in result than the severest woes which brute nature, "red in tooth and claw", could inflict on him.

And this intolerance is chiefly begotten by a misconception of the real mission of Truth and of the right nature of man's allegiance to Truth. To the hindrance of progress and the consequent misery of man, the false idea has prevailed far and wide that it is his unquestioning, because unthinking, obedience—and not his willing, because intelligent, allegiance—that man owes to Truth. Man has been viewed from a purely physical

standpoint; he has been judged to be a sort of machine subject, irrespective of choice and consent, to an unbending iron rule. That he is primarily and mainly a soul through which is to be realised an Eternal and Benevolent Purpose, has been but seldom recognised. Consequently it has been only rarely appreciated that apart and different from the Physical Law whose rule the external world implicitly obeys, there is a Higher Moral Law whose domain lies over the hearts and souls of men, and that conscious loyalty—intelligent adherence and not compelled obedience—is the true fulfilment of that Higher Moral Law. In other words, it has been very hazily perceived that there is an internal, as well as an external, Kingdom of God; and that He controls the former by persuasion, as He sways the latter by command.

Ignoring this momentous distinction, man has generally misunderstood the function and purpose of Truth. It has been very often supposed that Truth is not a pearl of price, buried full fathoms beneath the surface of

things, to be assiduously sought out and reverently encased in the bosom, when found; but that it is a "Morrison's Pill" compounded by some adept and trustfully swallowed by all. Very scant recognition has been accorded to the pre-eminently Theistic principle that Truth, as the nutriment of the Soul, is meant to induce what botanists term an endogenous growth—a development from *within*, and that this spiritual food should, therefore, be received and assimilated by each spiritual organism by and for itself. On the other hand, it has been a wide-favoured notion that Truth is a Prospero's Wand which only the master-enchanter is privileged to wield; while the motley many have either, Ariel-like, to sing and dance a merry carol or, Caliban-like, 'hew' and 'draw', as the 'master' may choose to command. Hence has been propagated that two-fold idea of 'shepherd' and 'sheep', of 'mediation' and 'dependence', of '*guruism*' and 'infallibility'. 'Popes' and 'Acharyas', 'Lamas' and 'Khalifs', have figured as the sole accredited purveyors of Truth and the only chosen messengers between God and man.

And wherever a soul has presumed directly to look up to its Father, to assert its native privilege to "citizenship" in the commonwealth of Truth, to urge its prime claim to enter 'the inner temple' and behold the saving 'shekinah', to demand its birthright to dwell within the "Master's many-mansioned house", 'bulls' and 'anathemas', inquisitions and ex-communications, have been ruthlessly cast at the audacious intruder. The daring inquirer of Truth is attacked, as Rajah Rammohan Roy has tersely said, with 'the tongue of the spear or the spear of the tongue'! To make an *independent* search after Truth and to seek *immediate* or direct inspiration from the Holy Spirit are unpardonable sins in the sight of a *guru* and his god; and they have always spurned out the ungrateful dog that, not content with the crumbs which fell from the 'prophet's' table, has presumed to ask for the repast the Lord has provided only for His 'elect'. 'No dogma, no dean', said the late Lord Beaconsfield; and to question the 'dogma' is to discredit the 'dean'. The 'dean' must live, the 'dogma' must prevail;

and woe unto him who questions or opposes them!

A kindred cause of intolerance is the belief that, as only a select 'few' are 'privileged' to be the 'channels' of Truth for the 'many', so one "chosen" people is the sole custodian of Truth for all nations. As a respecter of persons, God has 'ordained' a priest; and as a respecter of nations, He has 'chosen' one 'people'. The 'chosen' people are the sole trustee or agent of the Truth; God's inspiration is their prerogative; Heaven's direct guidance is their birthright. The 'chosen' ones may form a race like the Jews or the Hindus, or may constitute a Church like that of Islam or Christianity. But all agree in the dogmatic assertion that they—and they alone—possess the true and genuine revelation of God. To them alone has been confided the original celestial shield of Minerva; all others are vulgar human imitations meant merely to dupe the fool or confound the knave. 'Burn away the big library', the conquering Khalif is reported to have said, when he had



captured Alexandria ; for, if those countless volumes pretended to teach what the sole ' God-sent ' Book did not contain, their pretension was simply blasphemous ; but if they made no such pretension, they were a superfluity, a weariness, that should cease to be. The world has laughed at Omar, but has none-the-less honoured his precept and example by acting somewhat similarly. To bigots and sectaries it is altogether inconceivable how God would have bestowed a like care on all souls and nations, or how He should have been equally mindful or benevolent in all ages. Whatever self-complacency or national vanity may avow, it is, however, an eternal truth, which modern thought and research have been steadily bringing into clearer light, that the All-wise has been raising unto Himself witnesses in all ages and nations ; and that Truth, like light, has been shining on and spreading over all times and countries, expanding and intensified with the roll of centuries and the onward march of man. But hoary fancies are charming ; and it is hard to give up a time-honored prejudice,

especially when it is flattering to one's nation or church. Crusades may have ceased, religious persecutions may have largely disappeared; but civil disabilities and social restrictions will surely continue to prejudice peace and disturb good-will until man cordially recognises the principle of religious *catholicity* and clearly perceives that Truth is a many-sided polygon which discovers its several phases to diverse nations and that he alone is wise in his generation who, like the honey-gathering bee, goes

“ from bower to bower,  
And assiduous sips at every flower.”

But when once Truth is recognised as the common heritage of all God's children and a true *rational* devotion to Truth is preferred to a blind *national* or *credal* conformity to it, there will be but one household in the whole world—the household of the good—a household that can never be divided against itself.

Another “direful spring” of intolerance is found in the routine forms and formalities of religion. Paradoxical as it may sound, true

religion—belief in One Perfect God as the all-evolving and all-guiding Spirit of the Universe—will not only never induce but always discountenance intolerance. Intolerance presupposes disrupting differences; but in the spiritual worship of a truly spiritual God there can possibly be no irreconcilable differences. Consequently, intolerance has simply no place in it. It is because man has thoughtlessly and pitifully attempted to figure or present God in a physical form that our Heavenly Father's fair creation has been rent and desolated by countless strifes about the figure of idols, the nature of incarnations, the shape of caste or creed-marks, the method of ceremonies, the value of sacraments, and the interpretation of "texts", as helping and justifying each notion. That "God is a spirit" and must, therefore, be worshipped spiritually—in truth, love and reverence; that He is the light that lighteth every path; that "God is Love" and we are warranted—aye, invited—by His very nature to approach Him as His children and beseech His inspiration as His disciples; that to love Him in return and to love all His creatures for His

sake is the sum-total of man's duty as well as the whole store of his happiness—these are eternal, universal truths, which (speaking generally) none gainsays, as none doubts them. To hold and to practise them intelligently and loyally never creates any material difference and therefore never breeds that dreadful mental malady—religious intolerance—the general ‘infirmity’ of “small souls”.

May we, then, as its single sovereign remedy, respectfully plead with our gentle readers to search for, and, when vouchsafed, to enshrine in their hearts, that saving and sanctifying religion adorned with the four cardinal graces of *independent* quest of Truth; of *immediate* inspiration from Him, the Fountain-source of all Truth; of *catholic* appreciation of Wisdom from all quarters; and of *spiritual* adoration of God through *trust* in Him as the unerring Guide and through *endeavours* after Him as the supreme Exemplar of all? May the grace of the All-holy One shape our consecrated lives into models of a *faith* so serene, a *hope* so secure

and a *charity* so sublime as to transfigure  
even this darksome globe into a Present  
Paradise!

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### III

#### IDOLATRY: ITS SOURCE AND ITS RESULT.

(1891)

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The following extract from a recent sermon of our honored brother-theist in London, the Rev. C. Voysey, B.A., ably and eloquently states the direful results of introducing any the least alloy of man-made "idols" into the living faith of pure Theism. Though the remarks have special reference to Christianity, they apply with equal justice, in their spirit and essence, to the popular religions in this country. Under however charming a name or form 'idolatry' may be grafted on true religion, the fruit is always injurious to the spiritual strength and growth of man. Incarnation or *Avatar*, transubstantiation of bread and wine or *pranaprathishta* (the life-imparting) of stock or stone—western or eastern, refined or gross, every idea of a materialised or "symbolised" deity, of a God "made flesh," springs from one source—a

practical disbelief in the possibility of a direct spiritual intercourse between the human and the Divine Spirit, a virtual denial of the direct inter-communion of the child and the Parent; and it leads to one soul-stifling result—*guruism*, dogma, superstition and sectarianism. As the deity, so the devotee; and the worship of matter, in however sublimated a form, must inevitably “materialise” a religion. “Beware of idols” was not said of hand-made images alone. The undivided unity, the unconditioned infinity, the unalloyed spirituality, the unrivalled supremacy, the unparalleled wisdom, the unfailing love and the unstained holiness of the Deity—these are the very “eternal verities” of true religion; and to compromise any one of them in the least is to vitiate the whole virtue of Theism. After such a compromise, no philosophy can justify it, no enthusiasm can sustain it.

“To us it seems a matter of life and death to religion itself to fight with our utmost powers to uphold a belief in a God who is Spirit, who is the One living and true God, who is intensely righteous and loving and who is so near and close to His frail children in all time and in every place

that no Incarnation was ever needed, that no miracles of transubstantiation could ever bring Him so near to us as He already is. We fight to uphold this belief, because sooner or later the other belief—the belief in a God-made flesh—destroys the belief in God who is Spirit and the Father of our souls. It not only beclouds and defaces His pure image in our hearts, but it weakens and destroys our native capacity to believe in Him at all. Men take the idol through a false idea that it will teach them to remember the true God whom it is supposed to represent and they end in forgetting *that* God altogether and being absorbed and engrossed in their idol instead. It becomes at last to them impossible to believe in that God at all. Moreover, you will find that in proportion to the integrity and strength of our belief in the One true God—and I do not mean our mere intellectual conviction of it but our heart's love and worship and obedience and entire devotion to His will—in proportion to this, I say, we shall be very earnest in our pursuit of what is reasonable and true. The more we love God, the more we shall care for truth and accuracy and sound basis for all our beliefs and conceptions of God. If we truly believe in and love Him, we shall take care that our faith rests upon what is true, and that it should agree with all the facts; and we shall not be content with groundless assumptions, still less endure the introduction of any ideas that are false—if we can possibly help it. On the other hand, in proportion as we believe in, love and cling to a materialised God, to a God-made flesh and who needs the agency of a sacerdotal order to manufacture him repeatedly out of bread, so surely shall we lose



our regard for truth and fact ; we shall be filled with credulity and not with faith ; we shall swallow without hesitation any groundless assumptions ; we shall accept without a qualm any false statements, however monstrous, any allegation of miracle, however unproven or unprovable, and quietly acquiesce in any contradictions, however glaring. In fact, for all practical purposes, our religion will only be possible to us by crushing our native instinct for truth and driving out common sense. The falsehood from which we started will involve us in an endless maze and mire of more falsehoods still, every step in our downward career being more and more unreasonable and untruthful".

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# IV

## HINDU RELIGIOUS REFORM.

(1886)

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That at last several attempts are being made to recast the religion of the Hindus is to us a very cheering sign of the times. In a pure and reformed religion lies our sole hope, our only prospect, of future greatness for India. Never before was our society made up of more incoherent factors. Authority and Liberty, Conservatism and Radicalism, are struggling hard for life. Throughout the world, the struggle is the same in its main features; but nowhere under the sun is the conflict so severe, so wide-spread and so easily discernible as in India. A passion for liberty, for escape from that which is merely hoary and time-honoured, is in full force, especially among the youth, the rising generation, which, said the late Lord Beaconsfield, consists of 'the trustees of posterity'.

And the one question demanding a prompt, thoughtful and satisfactory answer is whether the leaders of our society will do justice to the responsibility that a benign Providence has entrusted to them or prove false to the duty they owe to their country by assuming an attitude of supreme indifference to what is taking place around them. The time is fast approaching when the two warring elements in our society should yield, should bend a little and merge into one stupendous whole. That either of them should cease to be would be a misfortune and a calamity. It highly delights us, therefore, to see the natural leaders of our society come forward and, with love and good-will for both the parties, propose terms of peace, friendship and brotherhood. Sabhas and Samajes, with the avowed mission of bringing about this reconciliation, are springing up all over the country; but, alas! mostly to live and to die like a mush-room or a prophet's gourd. Such is the aim, but such, we hope, will not be the life-time, of the Association for the Promotion of Aryan Vedic Religion, which our energetic and

highly respected Deputy Collector proposes to start. Dewan Bahadur Raghoonatha Row is a ripe Sanskrit and English scholar. Old in head but young and lively as ever man was in heart, there is a vein of practicality—perhaps, a little too much regard for feasibility—in all that the venerable gentleman proposes and works at. The far-famed champion of our helpless widows and hapless “married martyrs”, Mr. Raghoonatha Row deserves and commands a respectful hearing from all, in whatever he says. After a close and careful study of religion for several years, Mr. Raghoonatha Row has come to the clear conclusion that the basis of all religions is one and the same in general; and that the old, pure, primitive Aryan Vedic Religion enjoins, as every other religion does, a belief in, and love to, one God who is the Creator, Father and Friend, of all, to whom man is morally responsible for every one of his acts towards God, society and self. Mr. Raghoonatha Row lays down certain principles or ‘axioms’, as he calls them, which, in his opinion, form the basis of Aryan Vedic Religion. That there is but

one Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, All-loving God who is the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of this vast universe; that all should worship Him, approach Him by meditation, and try to approximate Him by deed and devotion; and that every one should cherish, abide by, and act in accordance with, certain principles which constitute virtue and should hate, avoid, and desist from committing, certain other things which constitute vice, is a brief but a pretty full summary of the 'axioms' laid down at length, even to the minute details of one's daily and hourly concerns. The objects of the intended Association, a branch of which has, by-the-bye, been already opened at Bangalore, are to encourage devotion to God, loyalty to the Sovereign and love to "my own, my native land"; to preach and practise toleration; to promote the study of our sacred lore; and "to form, enjoy and maintain a brotherhood of all persons professing Hindu Religion." Such briefly are the more commendable points in the intended Association; and so far our entire sympathy and good-will are with the movement.

But the sympathy we have for it should not close our eyes to its defects. We are of the decided opinion that the Association, as now proposed, will very largely, perhaps entirely, fail to satisfy the wants and the demands of our rising generation, for which mainly a refined and reformed religion is absolutely necessary. For instance, Mr. Raghoonatha Row says that the satisfaction of one's own consciousness is, as an authority, inferior, not only to the Vedas and the Sutras, but also to the Puranas and even to the puzzling text-writers and hair-splitting commentators who, as a rule,

“ each dark passage shun  
And hold their farthing rush-light to the sun.”

This, we humbly opine, is to ignore—nay more, to hush up or stifle—the opinion which is everywhere fast gaining ground, that one's own personal experience is the surest test for the validity and potency of a truth. Those who set up a book or a number of books as the highest oracle confound admiration with unquestioning submission, general agreement with univer-

sal conformity. They do not recognise and respect the supremacy of "that very still, that very small voice within, which is better than the Veda, better than any written book"\*. But India, Young India, asks for this recognition and will have it. Our elders and leaders must accept the principle that, while the root and the trunk are the same, the tree flourishes only when it shoots forth branches on all sides and that, while love and truth reign supreme, independent opinion must be courted as the prime necessity of a healthy intellectual, moral and religious society. India has too long smarted under the crushing weight of extraneous, infallible authority. Hence for the sake of that great God whom all, all worship and love, impose not that incubus again upon our liberated souls.

The doctrine of incarnation, again, is out of joint with the times. The source of all idolatry, the fountain of all miracles, the doctrine of incarnation is, we humbly think, too late in the day. It is, we fear, an

\*Max. Muller.

“ article ” in a “ creed out-worn ”. As Carlyle observes, it “ presupposes a certain rudeness of conception, which the progress of mere scientific knowledge puts an end to ”\*.

But the most pernicious, the most destructive, of all the “ axioms ” that Mr. Raghoonatha Row lays down is that a member should not only be tolerant but “ may compromise outwardly his own faith in order to avoid giving offence to any ”. If our sacred books sanction this sullying of truth with hypocrisy, then, for the sake of all that is pure and lovely in them, suppress this doctrine, weed it out, pronounce an eternal anathema on it. Give it not the patent of your authority, lest it should commit havoc and ruin. “ Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Ascalon ”, lest the sons of indifference should rejoice, lest the children of cowardice should triumph. India wants men with a moral backbone, men who have the courage of their convictions. It is this playing fast and loose with truth, it is this

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\*“ Heroes ”, III.



nasty trick of blowing hot and cold with the same breath, that has been the "direful spring of woes unnumbered" to this degenerated land. India stands in urgent need of the courage of Socrates before the Thirty Tyrants, of Jesus before the Sanhedrim, of Luther before the Imperial Diet, of Galileo before the Papal Court. India requires men who will wear their lives on their sleeves for the sake of the precious gems of truth that shine radiant in their hearts. The "Achilles' heel" of the average modern Hindu character is the absence of moral courage; the besetting sin of our countrymen is to

"see the right, approve it, too ;

Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."

But in justice to our respected Dewan Bahadur, we must say that fain would he teach the doctrine to all rather than follow it himself. It is not by mincing truth, but by his outspoken advocacy and uncompromising action in behalf of our widowed sisters, that he has endeared himself to us all, while placing

himself under the ban of excommunication from the so-called orthodox community. And why should he tell us all, who are proud to esteem him as our father, not to follow in his footsteps, if we are likely to offend some one thereby? Mr. Raghoonatha Row delights to state expressly his entire agreement with the first and foremost of our modern reformers—Rajah Rammohan Roy. We would respectfully request our Dewan Bahadur kindly to state where the doctrine of incarnation is countenanced by the author of “Tuhfut-ul-muwahiddin”, “the Christian Missionary and his three converts”, and Ramdoss’ letters; the original of ‘Shivaprasad Sarma’; the genuine writer of Chandra-sekhar Dev’s pamphlets. We would also like to know whether the doctrine of compromise was ever acted on or inculcated by the youth who braved the appalling dangers of a homeless and penniless traveller for the sake of his conscience; the official who sacrificed a fine worldly career on the sacred altar of religion; the reformer who raised a nest of hornets around himself, his own friends and

relatives included, and who even jeopardized his own life, by a bold and uncompromising advocacy of truth.

Let us not, however, be mistaken for unrelenting critics of Dewan Bahadur Raghoo-natha Row's proposed Association. Our most cordial sympathy is with the movement. But the very same love which we bear to it for its excellence and usefulness prompts us to disclose its defects. As for the rest, we are humble but warm supporters of Mr. Raghoo-natha Row. True servant of God, we say to him, work on honestly and ardently; your cause is righteous, your earnestness is undoubted. Proceed in your noble and self-imposed task; the All-merciful Father will bless you, your righteous conscience will recompense you, the whole world will applaud you and success will ever greet you.

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## V

### RESPONSE TO THE P. R. COLLEGE TOAST. \*

(1915)

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ESTEEMED CHAIRMAN, RESPECTED GUESTS,  
AND DEAR *ALUMNI* OF THE COLLEGE, PAST  
AND PRESENT—

If the College had a calendar, as I trust it will have in due time, truly and literally this should be a red-letter day in it. The fact that this celebration has begun this year is, to my feelings, particularly gratifying, because one of the objects I have for many years set my humble, prayerful heart upon is this Old Boys' Association with its sequel, the celebration of the College Day. Admirable are the sentiments which have animated these endeavours. They are praiseworthy in their spirit, as they are bound to be beneficent in their results. All the affection which repeoples the past and rejuve-

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\* Toast proposed from the Chair by Rao Sahab Y. Venkata Rao Pantulu, B.A., at the First College Day Celebrations (17-4-1915.)

nates age, all the loyalty which renders homage to real worth, all the gratitude which solemnises a parent's birthday, all the reverence which honours the memory of a *guru*, all the devotion with which one undertakes a pilgrimage to a holy shrine—all these sentiments are implied in, and blended into, the motives which have operated towards the formation of the Old Boys' Association and the celebration of the College Day. I, therefore, congratulate you all on this desire becoming, in however moderate a measure, an accomplished fact. I trust, nay, I feel assured that this modest beginning is only a prelude to, is the harbinger of, many a glorious development in the years to come, when the Old Boys' Association will be able not only to celebrate the College Day systematically year after year but to render tangible and loving services to this Institution in various ways.

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Now, passing on to the College proper, I may be permitted to say, without any the least touch of boast, we feel we are happy,

we feel we are placed under circumstances which, though not perfectly satisfactory, are, at any rate, highly promising. The store of good-work that has been gathered in by the lifelong labours of so many teachers of the past generation has been, so to speak, our starting capital. Those are the assets with which we have begun our humble toil; and it has been our privilege, in our day, to make some little addition to the rich store that has thus, through earnest endeavour and incessant toil, been laid in for over two generations.

The history of the College has already been sketched in sufficient detail. Beginning so far back as sixty-three years ago, the Institution may be said to be in what the ancient Roman called the 'grand climactic'. And it is fit and proper that just as the College has reached the venerable stage, there should be this new offspring of its activities as symbolised in the Old Boys' Association and the College Day Celebration. Surely, during these sixty years and more there must have been growing a certain distinguishing

tradition, a certain characteristic atmosphere, in the Institution. And if to-day we notice that it differs from other institutions in certain respects, it cannot be wholly or mainly because during the last half-a-decade or one decade some new and entirely fresh principles have been instilled into it, but because the tendencies that have been developing themselves through nearly two generations have been urging or ushering those latent principles into conscious efforts and patent facts. And may I point out that this Institution stands for two or three such prominent principles? The *first* is that members of all communities irrespective of caste, creed and colour are equally welcome. It was at one time thought that this Institution was meant wholly and entirely for one community or, rather, for one particular section of one community. But those who have been shaping its destinies have gradually made it plain to the world that, whatever might have been at times the external expression, the inner spirit was always as liberal as it could ever be. And when time and again it had a succession of Heads who were Christians, there

ensued also a clear recognition of the fact that this Institution was bound to be open to members of all classes. Thus it happens that now on our rolls we have students drawn from every section of the Indian community. As only germane to this circumstance, I may point out that certain backward classes are given every encouragement that is possible, on a practical scale, in the pursuit of knowledge. Thanks to the munificence of him who has been rightly appreciated and honoured as our liberal patron, it has been possible to make members of the 'depressed classes' completely free students; and for the last few years, not only all Panchamas but members of some other backward communities have been given education with absolutely no cost, as regards fees, to themselves. That is a characteristic of the Institution which ought to appeal to all friends of advancement. Then, a *second* peculiarity is that in this Institution, as in a few other institutions, a very interesting, though, at the same time, a rather taxing, experiment is being made in opening the portals to a few select girls that might seek education



side by side with their brothers. Thus there happen to be on our rolls at present sixteen members of the fair sex, there being one representative or more in every class excepting the Senior Intermediate. Theirs is a very trying position. We have not come to that stage of mutual confidence and mutual appreciation between the sexes when it would seem to be, as it ought to be, the most natural thing under the sun for sisters and brothers to come together as co-sharers in the same happiness of youthful pursuits and as co-aspirants for admission into the same shrine of wisdom and righteousness. However, if there should occur any chance of our realising that noble ideal under which we shall feel that sex is only an accident, as a great teacher has said, it shall be only through such, rather delicate and apparently arduous, experiments as the one now being made here, with an ardent desire therein to deserve your sympathetic appreciation and goodwill. You can feel sure that my colleagues and my humble self will spare no pains and leave no method untried to make it possible for these girls to live here as happy a life as can be

expected under these exceptional circumstances; and parents who are desirous that their girls should be educated in a manner befitting the position they are destined to occupy in after-life as mistresses of useful and progressive families, may bestow a kind and serious thought upon the fact that this Institution affords facilities, so far as may be procurable under the circumstances, for the higher education of these girls side by side with their brothers. The *third* feature I should try to indicate as characteristic of this Institution is that almost all, at any rate, a good section, a fairly large proportion, of the staff would seem to be eagerly desirous that the ethical side of the students' constitution should be carefully trained and character sedulously cultivated, if education is to prove, what it is meant to be, a power and a blessing. Of course, immediate results must be meagre and the full fruition of these efforts can manifest itself only in the generations to come. But I may be permitted to say that, not only through set addresses and in specific examples, but through silent and sustained efforts, a desire is being

given effect to to foster the principles of character and right living in the minds of the boys and girls entrusted to our care. Far be it from me to arrogate to ourselves the monopoly of this aim as wholly confined to, and solely characteristic of, this Institution. What I do wish to state is that the great end and aim of education is never lost sight of here. How far we have been succeeding, it is not given to us to say ; but it is possible for others to gauge the humble effort that is being made. If effort is of any account, to that extent we would plead for your appreciation and good wishes.

[After referring to the need for increased hostel accommodation and large playgrounds, the address proceeds thus :]

But more pressing than that of the playground or the hostel is the great question of numbers. Far be it from me ever to grumble that our numbers are too large. On the other hand, I take after that poor and half-famished mother who, though already burdened with twelve children, was sorry that she could not have a baker's dozen. And

though I may be the proud Principal of a grand Institution whose strength at its highest during the year now coming to a close stood nearer fifteen hundred than fourteen, I am really sorry that I have not yet crossed the Rubicon of two thousand. However, I cannot help feeling that, while, on the one hand, it is certainly human and permissible to wish for an ever-increasing fold, it also brings its own tremendous responsibilities ; and these responsibilities have to be shared, have to be loyally and manfully borne, by every teacher connected with the Institution. Unless all are at one in not only wishing for larger numbers but also endeavouring for higher efficiency, mere numbers will only spell weakness. Consequently, I do trust that not only we, humble toilers here, but all those that are interested in the welfare of this Institution will strain every nerve to reconcile the efficiency of the Institution with its growing numbers. And in this respect, may I venture, in all friendliness of spirit, to appeal to the parents, guardians and relations of these children to make common cause with us in increasing the efficiency,

in intensifying the sense of responsibility, of those that happen to be at the helm of affairs in an institution like this. I am rather afraid that most parents think that with sending their children here and paying the fees prescribed, at times after the due date with additional fines, too, they have completely absolved themselves of all responsibility as regards the vital growth of their children, except for an annual enquiry whether the children have been promoted or not. Unless the child in each case receives that attention which it deserves, that attention which the parent is bound to give to it, that attention which the budding faculties of the child crave from all who mind the growth of humanity—unless the child receives such attention during the eighteen hours a day outside the College—it is not possible for us during the brief spell of one-fourth of a day to conjure up results that will atone for the neglect and counteract the hostile influences outside. I, therefore, as the humble Head of this Institution, beseech the parents or guardians of every child to co-operate with us in our honest efforts to augment the

efficiency of this Institution, while we are rejoicing over its increasing strength.

Two points I suggest in this behalf. The first is that the parent should make a sacred point of inquiring week in, week out, through the teacher of the class or through the Head of the High School Department or through the Principal, how the child has been faring, whether the boy or girl—girls, of course, may be left out of consideration, both because of their smallness of number and their admitted superiority of conduct—whether every boy has been attending regularly, working steadily and behaving properly. It is the only way in which the parent can discharge the solemn duty which devolves upon him. It is an open secret that, in the majority of cases, the hours that are spent here figure only as a vivid contrast to the eighteen hours that are spent elsewhere. It ought not to be so. The home should be the supplement, the fulfilment, of the school; as the school has to be the seed-plot of those ideas and sentiments which will develope under the immediate, fostering

care of parents and guardians. The second thing I wish to stress with all the emphasis that lies in my power is this: namely, that parents and guardians should not be anxious to punish the teacher for the drawbacks of the pupil, either by craving or cringing that the boy might be promoted irrespective of the results, on the utterly irrelevant ground of his age or because of his matrimonial prospects or for some other adventitious consideration, or by inflicting a more injurious punishment, namely, humouring the boy by transferring him from this School to another, simply because he has not been promoted. In the best interests of the boy this ought not to be done. This humours his worst propensities. It would be something like telling a patient that he is past recovery and that his only chance lies in changing the room and shifting the bedding. The boy believes himself to be pardoned, if not approved; and the parent thus fosters in him a desire to defy his best judges. You may feel sure that in this Institution, as in others, we are not anxious at all to visit upon the heads of our boys the sins of our own omissions. On

the other hand, we eagerly and scrupulously give them every possible chance of escape into a higher class. The sickening sight of so many lads rushing in, the day after the announcement of the results, with letters for transfer certificates is, I feel, the most painful penalty that the head of an institution has to pay for his office. That is an evil which, I am afraid, is growing year after year; and I do trust that parents and guardians will, as a humble request from me, bestow their earnest attention upon this subject. I do not mean to urge that they should never transfer a child from one school to another; but I merely request that the guardian should bestow his anxious thought on it before he countersigns the application and backs the whim of the boy. I, therefore, trust that some attention will be bestowed upon this suggestion.

There is one important point to which I would invite the attention of the old students. You have a threefold duty to discharge. Firstly, you are all educated men. If education has any real worth in it, the benevolent



result, the fruitful product, of education is a balanced mind. To know how to judge fairly, how to view the opposite side from the right standpoint, how to keep the head calm while there is a storm raging around, how to hold the foot firm while there is an earthquake underneath, how, in a word, to carry a level head over square shoulders—that is the greatest acquisition of a sound education. It is, therefore, the first, the basic duty that devolves upon every educated man to merge the transient in the permanent, to look beyond the local over the general prospect, to perceive the spirit behind the letter, to understand the worth of the motive and tolerate the limitations of the endeavour and, above all, to bear in mind, and to conduct himself on, the principle that tastes may vary and standpoints may differ under diverse circumstances. To guide oneself in such circumstances with due regard to varied tastes, is the supreme appeal that has been made to educated men from time to time. You, as really educated men, are under a great, lasting obligation to plan your policy, to shape your conduct, thereby

to mould your life with reference to this great principle of what I may call 'a humane catholicity'. This is your first duty. And secondly, you are members of what we are all gradually learning to pride ourselves on as the Andhra community, the Andhra country. Far be it from me to make a pronouncement upon the trying question whether or not we should have a separate Province. I do not commit myself to any opinion on that point. But if I may, in my own humble way, put in a word of caution, I would say that this particular aspect of the larger problem\* may be allowed for a time to occupy a rear position till the ground be prepared, the prospect cleared and the need made manifest. There are many other issues involved in this problem which demand our very serious and immediate attention. And the foremost of these is the educational issue. Why is it that with brains that, as we believe, God has impartially bestowed on us as on others and with a fair amount of strenuous work, we are still not only numerically but also in quality so much behind the other sections in

the race? That is a grave question you have to face. It is said that we are poor. So are our neighbours. It is said that we are all weighed down by the many crushing burdens of joint families. So are they elsewhere. But if you ask me the most important reason why our young men are not doing justice to themselves, I will say it is solely, rather, it is mainly and largely, because they have not yet come to see the real worth of education. When I say 'the real worth of education', what I mean is this. With most of our young men—I will not say, with all—education seems to be either an earnest of a future fortune or an infliction cast upon them by parents and guardians who ought to know better. That is why there is such an amount of sluggishness, indifference, sheepishness, about the looks and the ways of such a large percentage of our young men; which constrains teachers often to ask themselves the question why their labours should be so barren of fruit as they generally are. I have regretfully noticed, as a humble worker in this field these many years, that many of the youth

make themselves deliberately sluggish in mind, not that they have not the native capacity, but that they are not faithful servants putting their talents to the fullest use. I find that there is a large amount of tardiness and slothfulness, not out of native feebleness of structure, but a sort of acquired habit to be negligent. It demands a considerable degree of patience to put up with that kind of behaviour; and it takes so much time to rouse this sluggishness into the right kind and measure of activity. I, therefore, hope that you, the past students of the College, will lose no opportunity of instilling into the minds of the younger generations that come after you the sense of duty to wake up and to realise their position. Again, the next important appeal that has to be made to you as members of Andhradesa is this. Only the other day—I do not mean to belittle anything done by others, but I only mention it as a specimen—only the other day Cocanada was the recipient of cordial congratulations from all sides that a princely bequest of eight lakhs of

Rupees was left her by one who originally came from Jagannaikpur. If you look into the provisions of the will, you will find there is elementary education, there is industrial education, there is foreign travel, there is a *choultry*, there is a temple ; only, there is no female education. I hear a whisper from behind that elementary education includes girls' education also. I am not oblivious of that. Current elementary education for girls means keeping household accounts and things of that level. But our girls required, indeed, a much higher kind of education. And why should not even a third of the efforts made in the new institution be directed towards an ample provision for the higher education of girls? That is a problem which faces you, and you have to solve it ; and until that is solved, our education will only be of the skin and the cloak, of veneer and varnish, of speech and profession, not of life and deed. I, therefore, pray that you, as old students of the College, may give your most eager attention to this problem. Another equally important consideration that

I would seek to place before you for your best thought relates to the wide-spread desire on all hands that there should be an amalgamation, a welding, so to speak, a unifying and thus a strengthening of life—real life—all over the country. What should all of us do towards the realisation of this high ideal, this noble aspiration, of the nation? We are, for the first time, after countless generations, coming to feel ourselves a nation: our horizon has widened; our outlook has become much broadened; our sympathies go forth to the farthest corners of the land. And beneath all these there are the seething, simmering inner potentialities. How to turn these into the right channel? How to train and strengthen the desire to merge the self in the larger life of the nation? That is the highest appeal that I venture to make to you, old students of Pittapur Rajah's College. I do believe that in this Institution, either amongst its supporters or amongst its workers, there have been from time to time inspiring examples of that broad conception of things in which the local

and the individual are overlooked, not in the sense of being neglected, but in the sense of being fitted and wrought into the larger life. You should wish, as every educated man should wish, that the vitalising desires and influences flowing out from you might be free from the dross of the 'self' and rich in the elements of sympathy and humanity. The sole hope of the India that is to be lies in the measure in which there prevails, and the pace at which there spreads, amongst her educated sons, a spirit of disinterested service prompted by the enthusiasm of a catholic appreciation of the true, the pure and the loveable, as found in men and in communities that custom and tradition would induce one to reckon as aliens. If strength lies in unity, it is not the unity of prudent policy, nor the unity of well-bred tolerance, not even the unity of good-natured affability; but it is the unity of a comprehensive culture, the unity of mutual appreciation, the unity of reciprocal regard, the unity of confluent energies, and the unity of responsive hearts, that constitutes the cementing force, the welding

strength, the moving power, of a progressive people. And the richest fruit of the education for which we all feel thankful is the temperamental preparedness to further every genuine endeavour to foster this spirit of true national unity.

Once again, on behalf of the Management and the Staff I return our heartfelt thanks to you, gentlemen, for this toast.

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VI  
FAREWELL TO THE COLLEGE.\*  
(1919)

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RESPECTED PRESIDENT, HONoured FRIENDS,  
ESTeEMED COLLEAGUES AND BELOVED PUPILS,—

So far as I can recollect, there was only one other occasion when I felt thus overwhelmed with an intensely grateful feeling for the kindly sentiment, the generous regard, the more than complimentary estimate and appreciation, similar to what has been my privilege this evening to receive. That was the occasion just preceding my advent to this place, as I was bidding adieu to the Mahboob College at Secunderabad. Then, though fully alive to the extreme kindness with which I was regarded by the friends there, I could somehow avoid being overwhelmed; because there was the

\*Reply to valedictory addresses from colleagues and pupils on retirement (Rai Bahadur U. Rama Rao, B. A., P. C. S., Collector of Godavari, in the chair: 18-7-1919).

far-reaching and cheering prospect of what I believed then to be a useful and agreeable career of several years in an institution and at a place where, even by that time, I had for more than a decade sought to employ the closing part of my active career. But now there is not the same help to buoyancy as there was on that occasion ; because I do not step forth from field to field, but I step aside from a field of work to perhaps a nook of retreat. Consequently, my heart cannot but be over-weighted by these expressions of kindness which, even in my most sanguine moments, it would have been presumptuous on my part to have interpreted as wholly due to me. Those of my friends here who have been connected with this College and its life, either as interested well-wishers or as direct participators in its administration, know that the earliest talk of my being given a fit chance to serve here dates back so far as 1894. Then I was told that I should associate and identify myself with the interests of the College. Though it was only a short time after I had joined work elsewhere, my friends and myself

thought that the arrangement intended would be easily accomplished. But as the old proverb has it, "there is many a slip between the cup and the lip"; and it was, in this case, a slip of a whole decade. A person who had first been thought of in 1894 was eventually, after a momentous period of anxious consideration, invited to the long-contemplated position in 1905. It was in a way a gain for me, perhaps; because I had put in ten years' experience—first, as a Professor in a First Grade College, then, as the Head of a big Institution, and trained in working and administering a school. In another sense, it could not but have been the reverse of a gain; because ten years of vigorous life had been left behind. Hence, when I consented to come here to shoulder the responsibilities of this humble office, I prescribed to myself a period of not more than ten years' work in this sphere. I thought that, as I had joined service here on the 1st of February, 1905, I should lay down my charge on the corresponding date of 1915. But again, as another proverb has it, "man proposes while God dis-

poses ” ; and what I had desired to do in 1915, Heaven designed should be in 1919. Yet, that my calculations were not misplaced has been most impressively, shall I say. most painfully, borne in upon me by the oppressive consciousness that, honestly, I cannot reckon the last 3 or 4 years of my connection with this College as the most strenuous period of my career here. What my esteemed friend and colleague, Mr. Jagannadhaswami, has just said, namely, that I more stood than sat, when at work, is rather ancient history now in 1919. It was so when I came. I knew not the necessity for sitting. I stood always in the class-room. I went about strolling and watching. It was my physical exercise. It was the expression of my mental hilarity. But its recollection so pains me now. For one like me, a deliberate sinner against all laws of health, the natural consequences of such a violation must sooner or later make themselves felt ; though I am thankful to my God and to my parents that unto me has been vouchsafed a constitution of exceptional strength, not fostered by any

vigorous physical exercise but in the native endowments of vitality. Even that constitution has had to give way; because, with all my professions of modern views and advanced ideas, somehow I have allowed myself to sink—if 'sink' is the permissible expression—into the oriental notion that the body ought not to be adored or overvalued. Now the effect has come; and the very love that I feel for the Institution has enjoined it upon me that I should no longer injure the College by adhering to a place to the responsibilities and tasks of which I could no more feel equal. I am thankful from the bottom of my heart, from the depths of my heart I am grateful, to the College Committee that, when I decidedly said that I might be given permission to retire, the Committee desired me to stay on for a year more. But I should have ill consulted the interests of the College, as I should have done violence even to the feeble sense of duty that has been vouchsafed to me, if I had consented to stay any longer.

If I may disclose to you some of my secret intentions and if you will bear with me for going into details of my own personal aims and objects, I shall say that by the time five years of my service in this College came to terminate, I cast about for a successor. And I trust, my friends, that the future, by God's grace and under God's guidance, will verify and justify my hope and my assurance as regards that selection. Now, I may claim, not your thanks, but, at any rate, your appreciation in this respect that, even just as it is given to the departing parent to entrust the child to one who the departing parent feels will be a second parent, so, after the best lights in me and according to the most scrupulous judgment in me, I have placed my choice upon him whom I have always been privileged to regard, if I may use the expression, as the heir of my heart and the successor of my soul. If, therefore, in my choice I have done that which, according to my humble view and opinion, is the best to do under the circumstances, at any rate I trust that

credit will be vouchsafed to me for having done, while leaving, my very best for the welfare of the Institution after me.

Now, as regards the reason for my continuing here after the decade which I had prescribed to myself had run out, into the details of that story, perhaps, it is not necessary to go. In 1915, when I had thought the time would be ripe, somehow I repeatedly felt that it was not quite the time. I said I would quit the following year. Then came that memorable year, 1916, when the Collège seemed to be shaken almost to its foundations; when some of its best and warmest well-wishers said they could not be satisfied unless Mr. Venkata Ratnam Naidu was sent away. Then the military blood in me revolted; and I said I would not go, if they insisted that I should go. When 1917 came, there was the University Commission. I thought that it would be unfair to my successor if I should expose him to the responsibility of a searching enquiry into work that, well or ill, had been done under me;

and thus 1917 required my presence. Why I continued in 1918 I cannot tell. I wanted to go; but the fates and powers said 'nay'. I had to adjust myself. I came back, only to realise how violently I had made a mistake. Thus I have availed myself of the earliest opportunity of rectifying the mistake; and now I go.

As I go, I feel quite confident that I carry with me—I shall not say, the appreciation, because I deserve very little of it, but—the kind sentiments and good-wishes of the true and thoughtful pupils of the College. And that unto me is the richest reward—a return and a recompense far beyond not only my merit but even my expectation. And for it, I am most heartily, most devoutly, thankful to them. I must avail myself of this opportunity of rendering my grateful and cordial thanks to the Trustee and Manager and the Members of the Committee for the uniform and unfailing kindness with which they have treated me all these years. That kindness has been so spontaneous and so prompt on every occasion that I



can put it down only to the natural goodness of one and all of these gentlemen, but in no way to any deserts on my part. The College authorities have always been extremely kind to me. Here I do not talk of the emoluments they have granted to me, but the place assigned to me and my opinions and wishes, even the free and generous hand given to me, in the management of the affairs of this Institution. For that most invaluable kindness who can help being most sincerely and heartily thankful? Almost simultaneously with my joining work here, a place *ex-officio* was found for the Principal upon the College Committee; and it helped to make matters smooth and pleasant and gave the Principal an opportunity for honest work happily done; which, perhaps, was not possible in the circumstances in which my predecessors had to work.

As for my colleagues, as they have been good enough now to repeat, they have ever believed that all was smooth and pleasant under me. But is it not a rudimentary physical principle that either friction or smooth-

ness can exist only between two bodies? If so, in the administration also of an institution like this, the smoothness and pleasantness cannot be mainly or even largely due to the good nature of one like the Principal. It has been due to the kindly spirit, to the sympathetic temper, to the prompt sense of duty that my colleagues have brought with them to their work. It has been due to their cheerful and willing disposition that all should go happily. But it so happens in every walk of life that, even as the General of the successful campaign is awarded the Victoria Cross, while the rank and file do the valorous part, the head gets the credit, while it is really due to the merit of his colleagues and associates. If they say that the work has been smooth and pleasant, I can only return to them my most heartfelt thanks on this occasion, as the account of the work comes to be reckoned and closed.

My pupils have this day spoken of me in such tender, feeling terms of affection. I know that the richest reward of my life-work has always been the affection and

regard of my pupils. That, indeed, has been the most valuable asset of my life, as it has been also the most powerful stimulus in my work. I know, and I say it with the utmost assurance, that my pupils love me. And it rouses the most grateful consciousness in me that they have always given their affection and regard to me. Of course, nothing is absolute under the sun; and even to this affection and regard for me there are exceptions. Those exceptions I trust will steadily slip into the general rule, as years of wisdom and experience come. After all, my friends, any one that has a human heart must feel affection and regard for his parents and teachers. He who does not do this is, if I may say so, only an object of compassionate concern. I only think that it is nothing singular, unique, extraordinary that my students cherish affection and regard towards me. That is what every well-bred, every thoughtful, every hopeful and every promising student feels towards his teachers. What is true elsewhere is also true in my case. Yet, all the same, even as I am doting and

declining, I do cherish the prayerful and devout desire that God, in His great mercy, may shower His choicest blessings upon one and all of my pupils, past and present.

I have had instructors, not only of acknowledged ability, not only of commanding personality, but of rare gifts of soul and spirit. And if their inspiring instruction and their uplifting example were not to be a failure—God forbid that they should be a failure in any case!—it was a natural consequence, in my humble opinion, that something of these graces should be reflected and reproduced in me. Consequently, as these expressions of affection and regard are rendered unto me, with a grateful heart and a reverent soul I pass them on to my masters unto whom they are ultimately due. This day and on this occasion, is it possible for me to do otherwise than to pray, can I help praying, that, even as the magnet is drawn towards the Pole-star, my heart may point to that sacred place in the North of Scotland wherefrom my revered master, though separated in body, yet ever present with me in spirit, keeps watch over

my days and my work? I should be guilty of a most unpardonable, altogether a most criminal, act of injustice to the name of the ever-revered Dr. Miller (Cheers), if I did not, in my own humble and imperfect way, pass on to my students the rich gifts of human worth which it is my great good fortune to have received at his revered hands.

Then, reverently remembering my *guru* afar-off, gratefully remembering my colleagues around, cordially remembering my friends all over and affectionately remembering my ever dear pupils, I wish unto this College a long and glorious career, a splendid career which, I am confident, is in store for it, under the passionate and yet dispassionate patronage of him whose most touching message by telegram, just read out, has been unto me not a surprise but none-the-less a welcome gift and a precious boon; through the enduring zeal and indefatigable energy of my dear colleagues and my beloved successor; through the devout attachment and affectionate interest of all the past students who, for once forgetting all

differences, if any, towards me, may think of the College as a permanent and monumental appeal to their affection and their regard; and through the youthful, buoyant, hopeful, zealous and reverent endeavours of the present, as also the future, students, generation after generation; and all these brought together, gathered together, under the grace and light of Him from whom all life springs, all truth emanates, all love proceeds and all joy pours forth. Under these noble aspirations I do trust that the College has a great and glorious future before it: and may He, the Giver of all good, who is almighty to do, all-loving to cherish, all-wise to guide and all-righteous to exalt, may He even unto the prayer of this sinner vouchsafe His own abundant and gracious response! With these few words I take my hearty and affectionate leave of one and all of you. Good-bye! God's best blessings be upon you! (Loud and continued applause).

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VII  
EDUCATIONAL POLICY:\*  
SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

(1922)

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MR. PRESIDENT,—

I beg to make the following motion:—

*To reduce the total allotment of Rs. 1,40,01,188 for education by Rs. 100.*

I should at the outset acknowledge that the suggestion for a resolution of this type I owe to an observation that you, Sir, were pleased to make during last year's debate on the budget. Therefore, I believe it is altogether superfluous for me expressly to disown any intention either to show up an old and valued friend like the Hon. the Minister for Education or to show myself off at his expense. I should, in fact, if I might, state, in a word of acknowledgment, that so far as

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\*Legislative Council, Madras (23-3-1922).

I am able to understand, he has been endeavouring, alike in the matter of improving the organisation and in the direction of amplifying the finances, to pursue a policy of progress with a zeal and a steadfastness which, when the results come to be known, will entitle him to the thanks of all friends of education. (Applause).

At the same time, Sir, while appreciating the work of those that are engaged in the field, it may be open, I believe, to a humble member of this House, to indicate certain drawbacks and shortcomings the removal of which is desirable in the best interests of the educational advancement of the country. To a few of these drawbacks, which adversely bear upon the educational system, I shall invite the attention of this honourable House. I believe that they deserve close and prompt attention, if the system is not to get out of date.

Sir, the first question I should like to raise is whether our programme of administration provides for adequate time, thought



and energy being given to this work in a measure commensurate with its paramount importance. About 75 years ago, the Governor-General of the day, the first Lord Hardinge, observed that for all the ills that India 'is heir to', the first remedy is education, the second remedy is education, and the third remedy is education. Sir, if education is thus to be the panacea for the untold evils which India has through generations suffered from, then I submit that no amount of time devoted to this work and no measure of attention bestowed upon it will ever be considered too much for the purpose. When, however, we remember that under the existing scheme of administration this all-important department is, to use a homely expression, bundled up with three other big departments and their united burden is cast upon the back of a single Minister, one may well ask whether the department merits no better treatment. On the other hand, there is the strange fact that somehow, perhaps more out of considerations of administrative convenience than from any intrinsic fitness,

the field of work is broken up into four or five sections, and these several sections are given in charge of four, if not five, members of the Government. That, I submit, is a method not very conducive to an intelligent treatment of the department as an organic whole, as an articulated system, in which the various parts fit into one another in effective co-ordination. Taking these two points together, would it not be a more eligible arrangement if as many as possible of these different sections of education, now distributed over a number of departments, were put together and placed in the charge of one Minister who might, as a set-off, be relieved of one or more of those departments which are now entrusted to him?

Next comes the consideration that education is now a transferred subject. That education is a transferred subject may sound like a trite observation. All the same, it may not be superfluous or amiss to ask ourselves what we understand by a subject being transferred. To me, Sir, it denotes that the

subject has been transferred from the category of an administrative department to the category of a national problem. Therefore, it seems to me that a transferred subject ought to repose upon every member of this representative House special responsibility as regards its effective administration. It will be a great mistake to fancy that the head of the department alone is responsible, and we may be content to be his critics. We are bound to contribute our share to the reconstruction of the system, each after his own lights. In this connection, Sir, I shall, if I may without causing offence, refer to one grave anomaly. In my judgment it is a paradox, if not an irony, that in a so-called transferred department there should be a big set of non-transferred items, items which we cannot vote upon, items which are impervious to our 'voice'. With the partiality of a school-master for an illustration, I shall say it looks as though a certain plain has been declared the village common to which all the recognised inhabitants have the right of access; but as one enters one finds a plot here and a

plot there fenced round by barbed iron-wire with the warning notice, 'Trespassers will be prosecuted'. That, I think, is a serious defect which calls for speedy readjustment, if—digressing for just half-a-minute, I might say—diarchy is not to be pronounced a failure. Sir, I am not so much concerned with the pay or the *personnel*; what I do note to be a grave anomaly is that those who are thus individually insulated become prime movers in the administration. In actual result I believe, if I may once again draw upon an illustration, it creates situations not much unlike one of those conventional cosmopolitan dinners, with high caste caterers, to which one at times is invited. One goes in great expectations of social amenities; but one returns with a painful consciousness of patronising condescension; while during the function there is a repeated manifestation, in the relations between the caterer and the catered, of a large measure of passive resistance. (Laughter.) Sir, for this reason, in the best interests of the department, this maladjustment should be speedily set right.

But a far more vital question is the one that, when a department has been declared 'transferred', it is thereby placed wholly under what I call 'indigenous initiative'. As the Braidwood Lecturer last year said, in the ship of State 'the motive power in the engine-room should hereafter be Indian'. (Hear, hear). It is this initiative that is sadly wanting. If, again, I may take an illustration, with the partiality of the son of a military officer, from the Army, I shall recall that little incident which was reported some time back as having occurred in Mesopotamia: the enemy had turned their guns upon our men, the latter desired to reply; hence some of the sepoys went up to the Subedar and said, '*Kerun, Subedar Sahib, goli chalayen*' — 'Well, Subedar Sahib, shall we open fire?'; and the answer was: '*Zara sabar karo, lieutenant se puchleyn*', 'Wait a minute, let us ask the lieutenant'. This Subedar, who had perhaps put in more years of service in the army than the lieutenant had seen years of existence, had to take his instructions from the youthful lieutenant.

before he could do the elementary duty of responding to the fire. (Hear, hear). It is this utter lack of a chance for initiative work that has stunted the growth of indigenous talent. Therefore, I urge, Sir, Indian intellect ought to count; Indian experience ought to receive credit; the engine should move with Indian power, though the watch and the outlook be the joint duty of the Indian and the European. That is the last point, Sir, on which, if I have any time left, I should like to lay special stress. As the Hon. Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee, the Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, perhaps the most illustrious exponent living of the Indian University system of education, observed only the other day: the Indian Universities have not been able to take root in the life of the nation, because they have remained exotics.

Perhaps my hon. friend, the Member for the University, will remark that this direful consequence is due to the fact that the University has not been allowed to exercise its autonomous powers. But I venture to think,

Sir, that autonomy is a mere relative term. Autonomy is good or bad according to the conditions under which it works. Unless it is envired by democratic circumstances influenced by a democratic spirit, autonomy may stand divided by a very thin partition from autocracy. It is this autocratic exercise of autonomy that has put the Indian Universities out of joint with the life of the nation. (Hear, hear). It is, therefore, high time that not merely the Indian Universities but the whole system of education was put in vital touch with the living, throbbing work-a-day existence of the Indian nation. (Applause). Here thorough, radical reform is imperative. If undue attention has hitherto been given to only one type of education, if, as is hinted in the report of the Calcutta University Commission, high schools have been mere nurseries for the University, need we wonder that the whole system has virtually remained outside the current of national life? High schools ought to be treated as a self-contained whole; the education imparted in them ought to be ample enough in range and varied

enough in quality to fit a person to enter life at its close. There is a host of other points which arise as we face this issue of a system of education under Indian initiative. But time forbids my setting them out. With the permission of the House, I shall just refer to two of these points. Firstly, the available resources and the method of apportionment should be so regulated as to serve the needs of all sections of the people inhabiting this presidency. Hitherto, unfortunately, it has gone mostly in favour of one or two particular communities, while others have been left out in the dark; I do not say from any deliberate, malicious motive, but mainly because those that had the ordering of things in their hands knew no better. But that practice must end; not only equal but proportionate attention should be accorded, not only equal but commensurate facilities should be afforded, to all communities (Hear, hear)—to every community according to its own aims and needs. Just as the doctor bestows the closest care upon a case which is the most serious, even so the educator shall.



give the largest and most sympathetic attention, as due of right, to those communities which are very backward in education. (Hear, hear). Thus it is, to come to a specific instance, that I hold that we shall be repaying a long-standing debt of obligation to the depressed classes, if we make the most liberal provision for their education in the budgets of this Presidency. (Applause).

Then, Sir, the second point is that even as in legal definitions 'he' is said to include 'she', we seem to fancy that a system of education that works well for boys ought to fit in quite as well for girls. That notion ought to change. Not only as the Calcutta University Commission's report has told us, but also as the Government of India have stated in one of their Resolutions, I believe, in the year 1919, there ought to be formulated a differentiated system for our girls and women, a system that is more in accord with their tastes and aptitudes, with their outlook on life, with their station and duties in after years. That is another subject on which we shall do well to concentrate our attention for

a while. Here, again, I shall plead that the available resources, time, money and energy, be equally distributed among girls and women of all communities. It is sad to recall that not long ago, perhaps only a couple of years back, an official document owned, as regards a certain home or hostel for girls, that out of 87 inmates so many as 75 were receiving free, not only education, but also boarding, lodging, books and all the other necessities, notwithstanding the fact, as that document itself admitted, that several of them belonged to families that could afford to pay but declined to do so. Such misdirected liberality should cease in the true interests of the favoured community itself; and the available facilities should be open in a free and well-regulated manner to all sections of the Indian People.

The last subject to which, with your permission, Sir, I shall draw the very special attention of this House, is the plight of us poor school-masters. Let not this House be deceived by the glamour of the 'fat salaries' that are drawn at the top of the system by

some of the Government servants. As to that, I hold that he who needs a 'fat salary' in this department is an interloper. In consonance with the traditional beliefs and the age-long sentiments of this land, we have always associated a teacher with plain living and simple surroundings. But it is one thing to practise plain living ; it is quite another to be put on short commons. And whatever might be the good fortune of the few celestials, it must be confessed of the whole host of subordinate teachers that from year's end to year's end they are put on short commons. Is that fair or humane; or shall we not realise that money spent on education is undoubtedly money wisely employed ? Notwithstanding the remark made yesterday by the hon. the Finance Member that this was a much-favoured department, I beg leave to submit, with the utmost humility, that this department is not receiving even a moiety of what is really its due. I may, for a moment, borrow the language of the fable to which the hon. the Home Member alluded the other day, the fable of Meneneus

Agrippa in *Coriolanus* and declare that we teachers may, without immodesty, claim that it is we that supply the general food which all do live upon, we are the store-house and the shop of the whole body. Will this hon. House, in recognition of our humble services, say, 'you grind for all, you furnish the flour for all, and you be content with the bran'? Shall I not pray that ours may be appraised, as it ought to be voted, really the most productive of all departments? May it be realised, in the language of the Bible, that whatever is spent on this department is like bread cast upon the waters which in due course will yield a return ten-fold and even hundred-fold in value! (Applause).

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VIII

FREE AND COMPULSORY ELEMENTARY  
EDUCATION\*

(1923)

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MR. PRESIDENT,—

After the somewhat detailed statement of enlightened public opinion on this question. I do not know what particular place there is in this discussion for the views of a mere teacher. Nevertheless, Sir, I may submit my humble views on this question for what they are worth. To me, Sir, as to the heart of every teacher, the demand for free and compulsory education, which is so insistently and so enthusiastically made everywhere, is a most welcome sign of the times. If I may say so, it is as though from the heart of the nation there is going up once again the ancient prayer of the land, *Thamaso ma jyotir gamaya*, i. e., lead us out of darkness into

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\* Legislative Council, Madras (19-3-1923).

light. This is really most refreshing ; but, at the same time, it is just possible that we may, in our enthusiasm, fail to be quite alive to some of the essential concomitants of this grand demand. So far as my knowledge goes, in almost all other countries that have accepted a programme of free and compulsory elementary education, that end has been reached through a series of successive stages of development, so that the final stage was a comparatively short step. But here, in this land, with our amazing amount of illiteracy, as we seek this ideal, we appear to be trying to make up, in one generation and at one step, the arrears of some centuries. Consequently, it appears to me that this object, if it is to be realised in its fulness and in its ardour, will entail necessarily an amazingly large increase in the number of pupils receiving education. That will, again, necessarily mean an enormous investment of funds. As the *London Times* said sometime ago, the educational scheme of this country should be planned on a gargantuan scale ; the funds required would rise

to a degree undreamt of hitherto. Therefore, the problem of funds will baffle all alike, the Minister and the public in general. That problem must be resolutely faced, if this question is to receive a satisfactory solution.

The second point to which I would invite close attention is this: We all desire free and compulsory elementary education; but what are the contents, what is the nature, and what the scope, of that elementary education which we all so eagerly ask for? It is just possible that in our enthusiasm we lose sight of that vital question—what is the kind of elementary education that the country needs? I am reminded, Sir, of a little incident in the life of the late Rt. Hon. Professor Huxley. He was very anxious to be present in time at a meeting; he thought it was rather late; so, as he jumped into his coach, he told the cabman to drive fast. But after a while, he did not know whither he was going. He then said to his coachman, ‘where are you driving to?’ ‘I say, Your Honour, I am driving fast’, replied the cabman. Just so, Sir, it is possible we may

be driving fast without noting whither we are driving. It appears to me that the general idea of elementary education comprises what are known as the three R's. Sometime ago, I was reading a book on Japanese Education; I read that in Japan, which had adopted the system of free and compulsory education, it was noted that in afterlife a vast majority of the persons who had passed through the elementary education had almost clean forgotten what little education they had received, so that what survived time was only a few of the songs learnt at school. If that is going to be the net result of our scheme of free and compulsory education, it ought to give us pause. We should devise methods such as are calculated to make the fruits of the elementary education which we wish to impart more lasting and more directly beneficial to the country. Again, it will not do if the elementary education we are aiming at lies all within the orbit of the three R's. That will not take us far. Elementary education to be useful and successful, as the *London Times* has



suggested, should be instrumental towards guarding India from the gravest peril of a modern state, namely, an uninformed democracy. If elementary education is to achieve that object, we should have a comprehensive scheme and curriculum of education. It should be brought into close and vital touch with the practical and every-day life of the pupil. It should have a direct bearing on the economic, social and political conditions and environment of those who receive such education. That will call for a radical revision of the scheme of elementary education, which, again, will mean also a radical change in the type and class of the teachers whom we are to employ for imparting elementary education. Hitherto, Sir, the average kind of elementary school teacher might be best described in the words of that young and enthusiastic aspirant for a place in a high school who went up to the head-master and asked for a post in the high school department and, when questioned as to what class he thought he would be able to teach, said that he had studied in Vith

Form, but had not been selected for the Matriculation Examination, and that he thought he could handle IVth Form, as he was two years ahead of it! Hitherto, the majority of teachers employed in the elementary schools have been of the type of which I have seen some very interesting specimens. When I was Chairman of the Primary Examination Board, in a certain district, for the same primary examination the teacher and the pupil appeared simultaneously! There should, therefore, be a radical change in our ideas of the qualifications of the average elementary education teacher. All these considerations land us in this one perplexing situation. Where are the funds to come from? We require quite a mint of money to be able to work out this scheme. Who is to provide it? It is easy to cry like Kipling's beggar, 'Pay, pay', to the Government. The Government has to pay so many; and the Government can pay, in any one direction only a very limited amount. It is quite easy to shift this burden also on to the already overburdened back of the local bodies. If I

may draw an analogy from instances that are familiar to me, these bodies are like the Intermediate student who has to study five different subjects, each of them under the control of a specialist or expert who demands a certain irreducible minimum in his subject. If these subjects are to be properly studied at all and if the student is to score these five irreducible minima, even the maximum energy of the average student cannot cope with the task. I do not know if my memory is right when I say that there are similarly five grants for these local bodies to make, and these grants are, between themselves, so large that these bodies cannot cope with the total demand. The solution has to be found somewhere. And while on this motion, Sir, not as a clever advocate but as a humble petitioning brother, may I invite attention, very serious and devout attention, to that subject which will immediately follow this debate, namely, the Religious Endowments Bill? And shall we not, Sir, in a real spirit of devotion, enquire whether, as we tender these offerings to Him whom we

believe to be the Giver of good, we may not annex a petition that, by His Grace, our offerings might be used towards what we, of this nation, believe to be the noblest of all charities, namely, *vidyadanam* ?

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IX  
ENFRANCHISEMENT OF WOMEN.  
(1921)

**MR. PRESIDENT,**—

If I did not rise earlier to have my 'say' on this subject, it was not that I needed to be persuaded, that I required to be shown by convincing arguments, that this was a very desirable reform. Those that know me know that I should be belieing all my past life if I did not warmly support this resolution. My only regret is that there are said to be certain insuperable difficulties, by way of statutory restrictions, for the admission of ladies as members of this House. I shall be very glad if the legal luminaries that are here will be able to devise some shortcut for attaining that very desirable object. I hope that, before long, we shall be privileged to hail lady members here, that this House will

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\* Legislative Council, Madras (1-4-1921).

have the pleasure of welcoming really desirable, talented and respectable ladies to give the benefit of their co-operation, their advice and support, to the deliberations of this House. I am quite confident, Sir, that this change will result in a great gain, that it will add appreciably to the value of the work and to the prestige of this House. I may add that I, for one, do not think it very necessary to state elaborately the arguments in favour of this proposition, either historical facts or psychological theories. For me at least, the old dictum of John Stuart Mill is enough. Race (human race) is essential, sex is accidental. I welcome this motion on that broad basis.

Having said so much and having made my position clear, I wish it to be possible to give a fair, calm consideration to some of the details that have been mentioned by previous speakers. For instance, a reference has been made to *gosha* ladies. That is not a point to be lightly brushed aside. It is a point that deserves the best, the most sympathetic consideration, because these *purdanashin* ladies are

restricted, in the way they are, partly from the force of custom and partly also by personal choice. Therefore, I think that some sympathetic consideration has to be given to that point. Again, another matter that I would submit to the notice of this House is that a highly educated lady, a lady also of distinguished social status, once observe to me that, while she was heartily in favour of the extension of this privilege to her sisters, she should think it not unessential that a certain modicum of literacy should be required. As a polling officer on certain occasions in municipal elections, I have vivid recollections of the very awkward position in which an illiterate voter is placed. He is there, if I may use the expression, a Buridan's ass between two heaps of hay. He does not know what to do. He finds that he has to make up his mind or go away; and in making up his mind, he is in the dilemma of pleasing one and displeasing the other of the two competitors. That situation, though it may be a flea-bite for a male, is likely to lead to very undesirable talk in the

case of a female. I, therefore, think that some small details of that kind should be given attention to, and should be provided for, when we convert this really laudable intention into an accomplished fact.

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## X

### EXCISE.

(1923)

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MR. PRESIDENT,—

I beg to submit an observation or two upon this very vexed question.

Sir, just now, we have been asked to hug ourselves on the situation that excise is our largest source of income. Certainly, Sir, we might congratulate ourselves upon this achievement with the reflection, 'so small a bait, so large a haul'. Sir, are we to sit content, contemplating with complacency the receipt from this source of so large a revenue, or does it also afford food for some other reflections? Sir, the income is, no doubt, enormous; but shall we be satisfied with only dwelling on its enormousness, or shall we be permitted to ask whether it does not involve also a certain measure of

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\* Budget for 1923-24, Legislative Council, Madras (13-3-1923.)

enormity? The other day, I was reading a book in which I found one startling observation. Discussing a certain question, the writer, in order to indicate the irrelevancy of an argument, said that it was like applying to a practising lawyer considerations of conscience. (Laughter). Sir, I do not know whether I should be held responsible for similar irrelevancy if I sought to apply to high policies considerations of morality, private or public. (Hear, hear). But trusting that I shall not, for the time-being anyhow, be ruled out of order on that score, I shall invite the attention of the House to one or two moral considerations.

I remember, Sir, to have come across, years ago, in the course of my reading, a certain ancient precept of this land, relating to the best method of levying taxes. That precept said, "He alone is a wise ruler who raises revenues from the people as a bee gathers honey from flowers", without injuring the strength, without impairing the charm. Will it be permissible, Sir, without being at all disloyal or in any way fanatical,

to ask whether or not this revenue derived in so large a measure, does, in view of two considerations—namely, from people of what sorts and conditions does the bulk of it come, and in return for what services rendered or what benefit conferred do we make this demand,—involve, to a most depressing extent, this threefold misfortune: namely, enfeebling the economical stability, injuring the physical stamina and impairing the character charm of a large section of the community? If, Sir, there is no irrelevancy in that consideration, then we have to ask ourselves whether any modern civilized Government, in this twentieth century of grace, is doing the right thing in drawing this large revenue from the pockets of such people. Sir, there is a contribution to be made by this Presidency to the Imperial Government to the extent of 385 lakhs a year. We have unanimously decided that it is an impost, and we have as unanimously settled that it shall always be characterised as an ‘iniquitous impost’. Sir, bearing that fact in mind, how shall we characterise this impost which

comes to five crores and four lakhs net ; all that drawn from the people as excise revenue? Sir, is it permissible, therefore, to ask whether Government is doing that which will commend itself to the people as a civilised system of administration or whether it is doing a thing that is likely to tempt the people to think of it as a questionable system of administration? If the criterion, to which I have made reference, set by that ancient precept of the country, has to be accepted as a valid test, shall we be permitted to inquire whether, with reference to this particular department, we shall consider the revenue as either a shining star or a murky blot upon the escutcheon of British Rule in India?

That is my first observation, Sir. The second that I beg to submit is this: The Hon. the Finance Member, in that very justly applauded speech, noted for its lucidity of exposition and for its mastery of detail, observed that our excise revenue had recovered on account of the cessation of the Gandhi agitation. No doubt, Sir, as a

statement of the immediate situation, from the financial stand-point, it is accurate enough. But all the same, perhaps, it will be permissible to remark that it would be nearer the mark to say that the counter-effort of the Government has in this direction successfully resisted a very wide-spread popular agitation, though unfortunately misguided in several respects. The reason why I mention it is this. I am second to none in this House either in rejecting the spirit or regretting the methods of the non-co-operation movement. Certainly, Sir, the non-co-operation movement, as such, was neither laudable in its aim nor wise in its methods. But at the same time, Sir, true statesmanship would be failing of that insight into, that living touch with, the reality of things, if it fancied that, in this particular respect, the nation, as a whole, stood by Government, not because it was opposed to the methods of the non-co-operator, but because it was also altogether averse to some of the inner spirit and purposes of the non-co-operation movement. Sir, though in all other directions the

non-co-operation movement might be judged an utterly undesirable thing, yet in this one respect relating to the excise policy of the Government—notwithstanding all aberrations, notwithstanding all extravagances—it could rouse the imagination of the people because it went direct to the heart of the nation and appealed to the long-cherished national ideal of total abstinence. No doubt it is quite easy to refer to the praise of the *soma* juice in the *Vedas*, to catch at innumerable allusions to drink in our *Epics* and our *Puranas*, and to indulge in the pleasantries of making a present to us, temperance reformers, of the chapter on the ‘Superintendent of Liquor’ in Kautilya’s *Arthasastra*. But, all the same, Sir, the fact remains that through all these centuries, in spite of the vicissitudes of ages, one great ideal has had an inseparable hold upon the sentiment of the country, namely, the firm adherence of the best thought and the finest spirit of the nation to the ideal of total abstinence. As an index to that spirit I may refer to a verdict of old Manu himself, who

was inclined to place in the same category of the five great sins, the *pancha mahapathakas*, *surapanam* and *guruvanganagamanam*, the drinking of liquor and the seducing of the guru's wife, that revered person whom we are taught to reckon as one of the five mothers of a man. That shows the measure of disgust and repulsion with which the better part of the nation viewed this evil of drink, and that attitude has remained quite unchanged, notwithstanding the changes, political and social, that have come upon this country. That typical modern Indian, that pattern of a patriot, Mahadev Govind Ranade, said on a certain occasion that, to the normal Indian, temperance meant only, and nothing but, total abstinence. To an Indian, therefore, Sir, temperance has no other meaning, it denotes nothing other, than total abstinence. Why I seek to lay stress upon this point is that on this vital question there seems to be an almost irreconcilable difference between the view-points of the Government and of the better section of the public. I may state that difference in the language used by

Abraham Lincoln on a particular occasion, that is, whether the evil lies in the use of a bad thing or whether it lies in the abuse of a good thing. The nation has said that the evil lies in the use of the bad thing ; but the Government have said that it lies in the abuse of the good thing. There is the contrast—the antagonism—between Government and the people. Sir, we have had the hope that with the change in the system, with the inauguration of the Reforms, with the installation of a ministry composed of the representatives of the people, this antagonism would rapidly disappear and the Government view-point would be brought into line with the view-point of the nation. But I find, Sir, after two-and-half certainly very busy years, we are told at last that the high-licensing system, which has been hitherto in vogue, is the only salvation for the country. Sir, I am anxious to lay stress upon this. The sentiment that I have already referred to, the sentiment that is current in the higher strata of all communities—not only Hindus but Muhammadans as well and, I



hope, also Christians—has to be reckoned with. According to this sentiment, might I say that the distinction drawn between licit and illicit drink is absolutely meaningless? As the Telugu proverb says: నా చెంబులో పోస్తే ఏళ్లు; నిశంబులో పోస్తే తీర్థం! The difference between licit and illicit drink is a purely official *finesse* in which the popular sentiment has no share. Sir, I may note that this distinction, with the popular sentiment, has as much meaning as the distinction between licit bigamy and illicit bigamy to a truly typical Britisher nourished in the traditions of monogamy. In the one case, bigamy, licit or illicit, is an evil that should be rooted out; in the other case, drink, licit or illicit, is a monster that has to be eliminated. Unto this sentiment which is wide-spread and which, in the renaissance of India, will be rehabilitated as one lofty national ideal, unto this sentiment, again, that formula to which one's attention is drawn so often, namely, maximum revenue and minimum consumption, that formula is entirely wooden, absolutely apathetic, altogether

unconvincing. That formula, Sir, will, unto this national sentiment and the resulting judgment, appeal as little as a formula that sought to relieve the anguish of the sorrow-stricken heart over the Malabar Train Tragedy—the formula: maximum numbers, minimum space. Therefore, Sir, I venture to urge that a change must come; that Government must be prepared to adopt another standard. Our Government should not fight shy of this good chance. If progress has to be made, if the nation as a whole has to advance, the best thought, the finest sentiment and the noblest aspirations should be installed both as the censor and the guide of the nation; and as the thinking, the feeling and the resolute sections of the community demand total abstinence, this reform shall be achieved. With these words, I beg to support this motion. (Cheers.)

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XI  
PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION  
IN THE SERVICES: (1)\*  
(1921)

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MR. PRESIDENT,—

I beg leave, Sir, to submit for the consideration of the House a few humble observations on this somewhat burning topic. I do feel, indeed, I may say that I fear, it is not easy to speak upon this subject without either, on the one hand, disturbing one's own equanimity or, on the other hand, causing disobligation to one's hearers. I do not know how far I shall succeed in keeping clear of these two dangers; but I shall honestly endeavour.

The first observation, Sir, that I would seek to make is this, that the nature and the magnitude of this grievance should be fully and frankly realised. In this connection,

\*Legislative Council, Madras (2-4-21).

Sir, it would have given me immense satisfaction if it had been possible, which I now find is not possible, to convey to the Hon'ble the President of the House, whose absence we all sincerely regret, not because of any want of efficiency on your part, Sir, but because I am told that the occasion is due to his indisposition—I say, I wish I had the opportunity to convey to the Hon'ble the President the sincere sentiment of heartfelt gratitude and of genuine admiration of myself and of many others in this House for the masterly manner in which he handled the situation and guided the debate when this irritating question was under discussion the other day. And I further wish, Sir, that a similar temper would prevail generally over the whole House, and the question would be viewed in its proper perspective as a national issue to be treated in a spirit of national responsibility.

Sir, I believe it will be a woeful conclusion if it should be supposed that these representations, loud as they might be, were mere sound and fury signifying nothing. I do think, Sir, that it would be a dangerous

misreading of the situation if it should be thought that these representations were, after all, only a clamour and a howl set up by a few selfish place-hunters, or that it was much ado about an imaginary grievance conjured up by a few sensation-mongers, or again that it was only a passing fit of distemper best treated with pitying silence. No interpretation of the situation would be correct unless it should be distinctly understood that these protestations and these representations were, if I may use the expression, only an echo, a faint echo, of an anguished cry occasioned by a deep-seated sore rankling in a host of feeling human hearts. I, therefore, wish, Sir, that it may be realised that, without exaggeration, barring an exception here and an exception there, exceptions few and far between, there is no non-brahman family in this wide land, with a member who has received some education and has shown some promise, but can add its sad episode to this never-ending tale of disgust or distrust, of disappointment or dismay. I am anxious, therefore, that this question should be apprehended in its right proportions.

The second observation, Sir, that I should like to make concerns what has been called 'efficiency'. 'Efficiency', Sir, is a word of ancient repute; and at this latter day it may almost sound as heresy to enter into an investigation of that word. Nobody here but will subscribe to the general principle that efficiency ought to be the test; and yet, Sir, I hope I shall not be wide of the truth when I state that efficiency may mean different things in different mouths. It may mean in one mouth a passport; it may mean in another a scare-crow. It may stand in one context for a carefully cultivated capacity; it may stand in another context for what has been very significantly termed '*a successful academic camouflage*'. On one occasion it may denote, Sir, the capacity to face a situation fair and square; on another the capacity to keep always on the lee-side of danger. Therefore, Sir, let us not place undue stress upon what is called efficiency. In our desire for hypothetical efficiency, let us take care that we do not make of this efficiency a Procrustean bed.

Again, Sir, here I may just for a moment dwell upon what are called statistics. I am a mere recruit in that field ; and it should be unpardonable temerity in me to cross swords on this issue with a veteran like the Hon'ble the Law Member. But, at the same time, Sir, I may be pardoned for confessing that as the Honourable Member was quoting his figures, somehow, with the spontaneity of a book-worm I felt that two considerations, two illustrations, crossed my memory. One of them is this. I may refer to those statistics that I am best acquainted with, I mean the statistics in the University Calendar. There, as I turn to what are called the percentages of passes from different colleges, I find that there is one college with 100 candidates and 40 successes, scoring, therefore, 40 per cent of passes. There is another college with 10 candidates and 6 successes, thus scoring 60 per cent of passes. There is another college with a glorious record of 4 candidates and 3 successes, thus scoring 75 per cent of passes. Hence, it would seem, from statistics, that the last college was the most efficient and the first

college the least efficient. But somehow the world, in its simplicity, goes its own way, patronising the first college with its 100 candidates and only 40 per cent of passes and leaving severely alone that extremely efficient college with its 4 candidates and 3 passes. Similarly, Sir, I may say that these statistics are not really very informing. Our Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Krishnan Nayar, has pronounced them 'fallacious'. Really, abstract figures as against concrete facts have little chance.

Then, I come to the other point that I would like to make. As the Hon'ble the Law Member was reading out these figures and was telling us how many applicants there were, how many selections, how many appointments, and in what proportion or percentage the appointments stood to the applications, all to point to one irresistible conclusion, somehow my thought was drawn as irresistibly to the story of that incorrigible unbeliever who, taken into the temple of Neptune, shown the numerous votive-tablets set up by grateful mariners that had escaped



dangers to life, and asked whether Neptune was not the saviour of all sailors, inquired in his stubborn scepticism where was the list of those sailors who had been drowned. Similarly, Sir, when these figures were read out, I asked myself irresistibly the question, 'Where is the list of those that have not applied?'—all those that did not apply because they dared not, because they could not have the heart to apply, because they could not command the accessories and requisites to a successful application? These are the vital facts against the statistics. Then in that connection, if I may just for a moment refer to the parallel case which has been cited by the Hon'ble the Leader of the House, namely, the parallel of the fluctuations of the age-limits with reference to the Civil Service, I shall request the honourable gentleman to note the parallel fact, namely, that in India quite a storm of agitation was raised when the age was fixed as from 17 to 19, and to say whether they are to be condemned if the non-brahmans follow that example in this case.

Then, Sir, after all, what is the place of efficiency in good administration? Is a well-ordered State to be content, Sir, with sporadic, spasmodic, individual and sectional efficiency; or is it not its chief function to secure an all-round national efficiency? In other words, is a wise and benevolent Government to rest satisfied with rewarding good results actually achieved; is it not more imperative to stimulate good results by a judicious and timely encouragement? Is a modern State to follow the policy of a well-kept hotel—‘first come, first served’, or the policy of a well-regulated household—‘fostering care for all members’? I, therefore, venture to think, Sir, that this efficiency ought not to keep us blind to the great issues involved in the question.

Another observation that I wish to make, if time permits, is this: though unfortunately an unpleasant form is at times given to these representations, to these complaints, yet I beg to submit that there is no inevitable necessity for thinking that to make these representations and to urge these grievances

must imply the casting of a slur upon the integrity of the High Court or of the powers-that-be. I wish to point out, Sir, that really the grievance emanates from this notorious fact that a certain practice, a wide-spread practice and a most appalling practice, has been allowed somehow to prevail for decades, if not for generations. I do not wish, Sir, to dwell long upon it, defining it and dilating on what it really signifies. It is enough for me to say, Sir, that somehow a practice has been current for a long while, which practice obviously postulates that to the prizes of posts and power, of status and influence, the prime claim—the prescriptive right—is vested, virtually, in the members of one or the other of two particular communities. Which those particular communities are, I do not propose to name. Suffice it to say that they are two communities numerically small but close-knit, and, therefore, like all small and close-knit communities, wide-awake to their own interests and to the signs of the times. They have construed these signs of the times for full advantage to themselves.

Here lies the root of the matter. But the times have changed ; and, if I may say so, the worm under the foot has begun to turn. Hence, I wish to urge, Sir, that these representations, in their real spirit, constitute a humble appeal to the High Court, whatever be the uncouth form in which that spirit is embodied. Thus, we intend nothing more than a mild reminder to their Lordships of the High Court (if, as a book-worm, I may put it so), nothing more than a gentle touch like that of the Laputan flapper which now and then told His Lordship that wide-awake attention was solicited to the cause in argument before him. Having said this, Sir, I am not very particular that this resolution should be pushed to a division. It is enough that we make these representations ; and we have every reason to believe and to hope that due consideration will be given to them.

One last word, Sir, and I have done. These representations are, at the first instance, being made to that august body, the Bench of the High Court. That is a body, that is a bench, outside this House.

May I not, however, say that these representations, in their fundamental issue and fuller treatment, apply to another august body, to another bench, of equal respectability and of equal responsibility within this House, I mean, the front Government bench?

The other day, Sir, referring to himself and to his colleagues, the Hon'ble the Finance Member said, in the poet's immortal phrase, 'We are seven'. Those who are acquainted with the significance of these golden words know how 'we are seven' stands for all that is pure and all that is loveable, all that is loyal and all that is devout. Actuated by such noble aims, held together by such solemn ties, as they work together, I humbly pray that they may prove our *saptarishis*, wise men and true, good men and just, to carry on the administration wisely and loyally, and thus unswervingly to discharge their lofty duties, in redressing this and similar grievances, in righting this and similar wrongs. (Applause).

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## XII

### PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN THE SERVICES: (2)\* (1921)

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*This Council recommends to the Government that, with a view to increase the proportion of posts in Government offices held by non-brahman communities, the principles prescribed for the Revenue Department in B.S.O. No. 128 (2) be at once extended to all departments under the Government and be made applicable not only to the principal appointments but to posts of all grades, that the Government should issue orders accordingly and insist on their being enforced, and that to this end half-yearly returns showing the progress made should be submitted by the head of each office. Such periodical returns should be made available to the Members of the Legislative Council.*

MR. PRESIDENT,—

Last April, in connection with a kindred resolution, I solicited the permission of the House to make a few observations; and I make a similar request now, Sir, it gives me much pleasure to be able to welcome this resolution very heartily. It is a matter for

\* Legislative Council, Madras (5-8-21).

sincere thankfulness that a great principle, so ardently pleaded for from this side of the House, is being recognised in this ample manner. The thankfulness is intensified by the consciousness that this recognition is one of the first fruits, and, as I prayerfully hope, it may prove one of the richest fruits of the labours of this Reformed Council; and the satisfaction is all the heartier that this recognition has come so soon after the admission into the inner counsels of the Government of three of the chosen and trusted representatives of the people. For these reasons, therefore, we are profoundly thankful to Government for bringing forward this alternative resolution, whereby they set the seal of their acceptance on the principle of communal representation.

At the same time, Sir, it is obvious from the wording of the substituted resolution, when compared with that of the original resolution, that this is of the nature of a compromise. No doubt, it is a compromise honorable to both the parties, in that the principle is kept virtually intact, while the

methods are modified and the claims or expectations are, for the present, moderated. It is to be expected that, under these conditions, the proposed resolution will be given a fair trial; so that it may yield all the good results it is capable of. All the same, it is but a compromise that ought to be amenable to periodical review and revision; for which provision has been made, in the resolution itself, in the form of half-yearly returns. These returns will be made available to this Council; and honourable members are sure to use them to the best advantage towards a vigorous enforcement of the policy now being enunciated.

Sir, I beg to state in this connection that the interest which I and, methinks, several others in this House feel in this question, is, not the interest of the official or the administrator, but the interest of the citizen and the social reformer. Therefore, the eagerness we evince about this subject of adequate communal representation in Government posts and in honorary offices is—I beg to declare it most emphatically—not born of an inordinate



craving for the ' loaves and fishes ' of office ; but it emanates from the conviction, based on wide experience, that such a representation serves as a powerful stimulus to the education, and as a sure index to the civic recognition and the social respectability, of any community as a whole. Therefore, we feel that this recognition of the principle of Communal Representation is the first sure step in that general advancement of the nation which we all devoutly wish for.

Sir, I will next, with your permission and the permission of the House, dilate a little on this brief observation that this resolution, according to my understanding of its significance, is pregnant with beneficent possibilities—God granting them—of a far-reaching character. As a school-master, I have a partiality for graphic illustrations. A colleague of mine at Masulipatam, speaking of certain students that had not come up to his expectations, said that they had got behind the doors when brains were being dealt out. There has been, it is to be feared and regretted, a notion current, for a good while, in

certain quarters, that the large majority of those inhabiting this land of diverse castes and creeds had got behind the doors while brains were being dealt out. One aim of the non-brahman movement has been to falsify this notion, and to prove, if possible, that Dame Nature has not been a step-mother to the bulk of her children—to establish, if possible, that the ways of God to man have been just and generous. It is with this worthy aim in view that we have been so incessantly pressing for adequate communal representation; and if this resolution should be as vigorously put into force as it is now enthusiastically moved, I am confident that the calm atmosphere which the Hon'ble the Finance Member desires will be established—not the deceptive calm atmosphere that comes of a suppression of just demands, but the genuine calm atmosphere which is the expression of the heart's satisfaction that the right has come to the rightful.

Again, Sir, great are the possibilities of this resolution, as the enunciation of a sound policy, in another direction. When the

domain of India had been securely acquired and thoughtfully organised for administrative purposes, there ensued a period of all-round progress with the aid of the several facilities afforded by that system of wise administration. But the pace of progress, so far as it relates to political and official life, has been markedly different in different sections of the people; and consequently there has arisen a state of affairs which—borrowing a graphic phrase of Rabindranath Tagore—one may describe as an exaggerated giraffe with the head so far away from the tail—with the classes so much in advance of the masses. And a question—an appealing question—arose from the masses, from the ‘cottage’ where the real nation, as Bright said, dwells: “what about us, the masses?” The reply came, “The cause of the classes is the cause of the masses; the masses rise or fall with the classes”. This was a very ‘catching’ reply and seemed to satisfy all. But the non-brahman movement is an emphatic practical ‘caveat’ entered against this answer; with the counter and, as we believe, truer

position, "the cause of the masses is the cause of the classes ; the classes shall rise or fall with the masses." It is this recognition of the claims of the masses which will result in that general advancement of all sections and which will thus make for true national progress, that renders this resolution so valuable to us. And as we heartily accept it, we beg to offer our grateful thanks to the Hon'ble Mr. Knapp and his colleagues for their sagacity and sympathy in presenting it to this House.

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XIII  
A CONSCIENCE CLAUSE  
IN THE GRANT-IN-AID CODE.\*

(1921)

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MR. PRESIDENT,—

Perhaps I ought to have stood up earlier to give expression to my humble views on the subject, as I think that it is impossible at this stage to avoid a recapitulation of a good deal that has been said by others. At the same time, Sir, I feel that I owe it as a sacred duty, from an intense sentiment of gratitude, to bring my humble testimony to the excellent work that is being done by the missionary institutions, and, among them, by that glorious, world-renowned institution to which I have the honour to belong as an old student, I mean the Madras Christian

\* Legislative Council, Madras (15-11-21), on the motion, 'That this Council recommends to the Government that a new rule be inserted in the Grant-in-Aid Code that no grants will be paid to any institution that compels any student to attend any religious class without the consent of his parents or guardian.'

College. (Applause). Sir, this subject has been before the public now for some years and, therefore, most members here have fairly well-considered opinions of their own in regard to it. I have, as an educationist, given some thought to this; and I have arrived at the conclusion, notwithstanding the arguments that have been urged on the opposite side, that the introduction of the change proposed will not be a move in the right direction. To state my views categorically, I believe that the insertion of what is called the conscience clause is, firstly, unnecessary and uncalled for; secondly, it is unfair, if not unjustifiable; thirdly, when closely viewed, it will be found detrimental to the best interests of the country.

I shall now proceed to state, in a few words, my meaning under each of these heads. First, I have stated that it is unnecessary. As has already been pointed out, the present system has worked no harm. On the other hand, the existing system of religious instruction given in the mission institutions has contributed a great deal of benefit. It has

already been stated that of the five Indian Members on the front Government bench, with the exception of only one member, the other four have received a substantial portion, if not the whole, of their education in missionary institutions. Similarly, Sir, all over the House, there are, I believe, scores of honourable members who will also acknowledge that they owe the best part of their education to Christian institutions. What in their cases has been the result of the religious instruction imparted in those institutions? Now, with the stress of student life long removed from our minds, and with the advance of 'the years that bring the philosophic mind' which reflects calmly upon the results of many of our past experiences, will it be gainsaid that we all dwell with feelings of gratitude upon the great benefit which we have derived from the religious instruction in mission institutions? Did it not tend to the formation of those traits of character that 'make us men'? As the Calcutta University Commission remarked: the examples of these

great teachers are a source of strength, their aspirations are a richness of ideals, to all those who come under their guidance. Therefore, not only has this system not worked any harm but it has brought a great deal of good to the community.

Another ground, Sir, on which I feel that this clause is unnecessary may, at the first mention, sound strange and paradoxical. Yet, I believe that a little reflection will indicate that there is a sound fundamental principle underlying the observation I am about to make. In England the conscience clause is necessary ; but in India it is unnecessary. Where the community as a whole belongs to one religion divided into a number of sects and denominations ; where they all trace back their faith to the same origin and claim their inspiration from the same sources, then certainly there is something repulsive to the conscience to be told that on the same basis, deriving inspiration from the same source, one view is right and another is wrong. On the other hand, in India, there is no common ground between the teacher and the taught,



and instruction is given solely upon the humanitarian basis of an appeal to reason ; and I do not know whether to receive this instruction under these conditions will be tantamount to apostacy and will cast a reflection upon one's conscience. It is patent that the teacher and the taught stand on separate grounds as members of different religions ; and there is no such thing as a tacit acceptance of the axiomatic principles on which that religious instruction is based. Therefore, I do not think there is any necessity for the introduction of a conscience clause, seeing that there is no compromise of conscience involved in the practice.

Then, Sir, I have stated that this clause is not justifiable. The Despatch of 1854, which is considered to be the foundation of the educational system in India, expressly laid down that grants-in-aid should be given on a basis of 'entire abstinence from interference with the religious instruction' given in the institutions thus aided. I am quoting the very words of the Despatch. That pledge then given in the Despatch has

attracted to our country quite a mint of money and a host of workers, whose immense service to the community everyone is gratefully aware of. There stands, as my revered teacher, Dr. Cooper, once said, on one side of the Esplanade Road a noble institution which, in its structural expression, is no mean rival to what the Government, with illimitable resources, have reared on the other side of the street. The wealth of men and resources bestowed on the splendid work done there is symbolised in that noble statue that stands as the guide and the genius of the whole Institution. (Applause.) There are similar institutions, perhaps not of the same magnitude, which have struck deep root and been doing excellent work all over the land, from Masulipatam to Tinnevely and from Mannargudi to Mangalore. Are all these institutions now to be told that the hand of the clock shall be set back and they shall receive no aid unless they cease to include religious instruction in their curricula of studies? I believe that is a state of things which it will not be easy to differentiate

from a breach of faith. Therefore, Sir, I think that the proposal is utterly unjustifiable. Let us look at the magnitude of the work these schools have been doing. My honourable friend, Rev. Mr. Meston, referred to the boys' schools. I shall refer to the girls' schools. Out of the forty girls' schools that are recognised by the University as qualified to present candidates for the Secondary School-Leaving Certificate or the Matriculation Examination, only six or seven are under the control of the Government, and the remaining 34 or 33 are wholly under Christian Mission management. The benefaction which has studded the country with boys' schools and boys' colleges with private resources has not been able to establish a single girls' High School under indigenous management. That being the magnitude of the work in the sphere of female education which is being done by these mission institutions, if we now tell them that unless they give up that instruction (which may be called compulsory religious instruction only in the sense that it is an integral part of the

programme like any other part of their educational scheme) without which they will feel that their programme is truncated and rendered incomplete, we shall withdraw grants from these institutions, we shall be injuring our educational system at a vital point.

Thirdly, I have stated, Sir, that, closely considered, the introduction of this clause will be prejudicial to the best interests of this country. I shall illustrate what I have to observe with a little anecdote. At Pachaiyappa's College some years ago, the library was being reorganised, and whilst the library books were being sorted under different heads, the young man in charge of the work came upon a copy of the Bible. He was not able to decide upon the right place for that volume in the new catalogue; and he went up to a professor who happened to be a Christian and asked him under which head he should place the book. By his side there was another professor, a non-Christian. The Christian professor said, 'Place it under history'; while the non-Christian professor

said, 'I should rather place it under fiction'. Sir, the remark, though a joke in that instance, is the last survival of a prejudice that has long prevailed, namely, that the scriptures of other creeds are all fiction, while the scriptures of our faith alone are pure history. We have to change from that narrow position into this larger view, namely, that all the scriptures are historical and therefore we have to accord equal rank, in a spirit of reverence, to the prophets and sages of all countries and of all religions; and towards that great consummation this kind of instruction, of course duly supplemented by other agencies, will steadily lead, until the inspiring sentiment is fostered in us all that in the one House of our Universal Father there are many mansions. (Applause).

For these reasons, I oppose this resolution.

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## XIV

### ELEVATION OF THE DEPRESSED CLASSES.\*

(1923)

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Sir,

The motion standing in my name runs thus :—*To reduce the allotment of Rs. 8,95,080 for the Commissioner of Labour and Industrial Settlements by Rs. 100.*

MR. PRESIDENT,—

I am aware of the eagerness of this House to get through the whole work as rapidly as possible so that whatever we should desire to reduce might be effectively achieved. Nevertheless, while sharing in this eagerness, I venture to ask the permission of the chair for a few minutes, as I seek to draw the attention of the House, their very earnest and sympathetic attention, to what I believe to be a question of prime importance in the evolution of a new and better India. Sir, I think it is necessary that I should state that, in

\* Legislative Council, Madras (21-3-23.)

undertaking to move this motion, it is far from my intention either to cast any aspersions on the Government or to suggest anything like a want of confidence in the Hon. the Home Member. My sole object, as I have already stated, is to request the House, if I may, to pause for a few minutes and consider the momentousness of this question of the elevation of the depressed classes. Sir, a well-known journalist has observed that the centre of gravity of social advancement in this country has shifted from the question of foreign voyages to the question of the elevation of the depressed classes. Therefore, Sir, I wish to request the House to ponder whether or not we ought to bestow, in view of the almost incalculable magnitude of the matter, much closer attention and much larger sympathy and, consequently, much ampler funds, than we are now doing, proportionate to this momentous question of national expansion. Sir, I shall here recall what has recently been stated by one of the worthies, one of the most highly honoured and revered sons, of India at present, I mean

Dr. Sir P. C. Roy. Just the other day, he said that the treatment which for generations and centuries had been given to the depressed classes was nothing short of a national sin, and unless the nation as a whole strove to avert Nemesis by early repentance and ample retribution, we were doomed to be the outcasts of the Empire. It is to this aspect of the question, Sir, that I wish to invite very serious and sympathetic consideration. I should like to utter a word of cordial appreciation and grateful recognition in one respect. The Hon. Sir Narayan Ganesh Chandavarkar, at present the President of the Bombay Council, stated sometime ago that, when he was on a visit to Bangalore, an elderly Indian lady, an esteemed member of the family with whom he was staying, pointed out to him the gardener of the house, a member of a depressed class, who, with his daughter, was under caste excommunication for the double caste-offence, namely, of the man having first given some education to his daughter, his only child, with the consequential freedom and then the father and the



daughter having declined a match which, according to the caste-custom, they were bound to accept. None the less, the two had held out, each leaning on the strength of the other and each depending on the confidence of the other. When this instance was mentioned by the old lady to Sir Narayan, the latter observed that truly the work of the Depressed Classes Mission had succeeded. 'Nay', said the old lady, 'the British rule has told'. I wish to point out that in this one respect, if not in some others also, the British rule has told; and the conscience of the nation and the consciousness of the depressed classes have been awakened in a manner that challenges esteem on all sides. For this service we cannot be sufficiently thankful to the British rule. One of the noblest sons of Great Britain that ever came to serve in this country—I mean Lord Metcalfe—said more than a century ago: 'This world is governed by an Invisible Power which giveth and taketh away dominion. All that human rulers could do is to deserve the dominion by furthering the

happiness of those who were placed under their care.' Judging by that criterion and directing our attention particularly to what has been done by way of an honest and strenuous attempt to elevate the depressed classes—I say, judging by that criterion—it must be owned that at the hands of that Invisible Power the British nation has deserved dominion in India. Having said that, I desire, at the same time, to note that, if there has been on the one side strenuous effort for the elevation of the depressed classes on the part of the representatives of the British administration, there has not been wanting the most cordial and grateful appreciation of that good work on the side of those who have best benefited by it. Speaking at a public meeting of his community some time back, my hon. friend, Rao Bahadur M. C. Raja, said that members of his community had fought and shed their blood on behalf of the establishment of the British rule and that they would similarly fight and shed their blood to resist every ill-considered and misguided movement to disturb that

position or to shake the foundations of that rule. This healthy and happy relation of mutual regard and mutual trust has been established between the rulers and those who have been benefited by that rule ; and we all wish that grace may be granted for the uninterrupted continuance of that relation.

Sir, as we appreciate this, let us, as we seek to remove the bureaucratic methods which we never miss an opportunity to condemn, recognise that there has been this redeeming feature in the bureaucratic Government, which it is our bounden duty to carry into the democratic system by which we wish to replace the old order of things ; for if there is one thing which should be borne in mind more than another, it is sedulously to combat the forces that stand in the way of ameliorating the depressed classes. As I make this general observation, I have particularly in mind this special consideration, that in dealing with this question of the amelioration of the depressed classes, it will not do to cling rigidly to what we regard to be the *general* principles of administration.

Rules should be modified and standards should be moderated, and a considerable amount of what we would call differential treatment should be accorded, if this work was to succeed. Therefore, it will be wrong to urge that methods which we in general have accepted with reference to the other branches of the administration shall strictly apply here also. It will not do, for instance, to contend, if it be pleaded that the depressed classes are hopelessly poor, that there are also poor members in other communities. I venture to submit that there is a radical distinction between there being poor members in well-to-do communities and their being poor *communities* who are hopeless in their economic condition. There is no community that does not contain some poor members. The mercantile community has certainly some paupers, and the land-holding community has surely some that are utterly bankrupt. That does not argue, nobody therefore urges, that the mercantile and the land-holding community are poor. Though there may be some members not in well-to-do

circumstances, the community is not in such pitiable condition of abject poverty as the depressed classes. A poet has avowed, 'Slow rises worth by poverty depressed'. Shall I say that in this country there is no poverty so depressing as the poverty of caste? It is this poverty of caste that has been condemning to the lowest depths of degradation the so-called depressed classes. How to lift them to that position which is their due? How shall we redeem the moral, the national debt that we owe to them? That is the supreme problem today. I venture to submit that it is not one Mr. Paddison, it is not one Mr. Knapp, it is not this one department or that other department, but it is every department and each one of us with some power, some occasion for exercising patronage, that ought to feel it a duty to do all that is possible to uplift these depressed classes. What is the magnitude of the task that has to be accomplished? If we remember that these depressed classes number over 65 lakhs, one-fifth of the total population of the Madras Presidency, and if we again

realise that, unlike the department of sanitation, health and vital statistics—which we were told the other day would test whether we were fit for *Swaraj*—this department is to ameliorate the *whole life* of the depressed classes, not merely their health and sanitation, but also their education, their social emancipation, their civic recognition and their religious elevation. If we recognise the extent to which this work has to be carried on, certainly we shall see that we, as a nation, in whose hands any power has been placed, upon whose shoulders any responsibility has been reposed, we all owe a great duty to these depressed classes. I, therefore, repeat that this must be treated as a national concern and not merely as a subject that concerns this one department or that.

[Speech resumed after adjournment for lunch].

I am sincerely grateful to you, Sir, for having allowed me to continue my remarks. Sir, as we broke up for lunch I was seeking to point out that it was the imperative duty

of every head of department, nay, every officer of any position and power, to encourage the employment, in the largest number possible, of members of the depressed classes. If, Sir, inequalities are to be removed from our race, if the old spell is to be lifted from our hearts, if the ring-fences of monopoly are to be broken, if the magic-circle of superstition is to be effaced, the only remedy lies in placing the members of the depressed classes in posts of position and responsibility; where, by their acts and by their example, they will be able to prove that they, too, have got in them the natural capacity to reach the acme of perfection in the long run. Therefore, it is of prime importance that they should be employed in as large numbers as possible. As I have already hinted, in view of the vast numbers concerned and in view of the wide range of work that has to be done, in my humble opinion—if my humble opinion finds endorsement at the hands of the Hon. Member in charge—this department for the elevation of the depressed classes should constitute a separate department

by itself. If in the beginning the financial outlay is large, it will be so only for a limited period of time. For, as the work appeals further to the heart of the people, I am sure there will rise from all communities voluntary workers who will each declare, if I may use the well-known language, 'My *dhanam*, my *manam* and my *thanam* all are dedicated to this work ; and I have rendered myself unto this work'. Therefore, Sir, in the employment of workers for this department we should always bear in mind that it is the voluntary work that is going finally to succeed ; and this good work will be best achieved if we also remember the proverb, *viz.*, that blood is thicker than water, and employ, to the largest extent possible, workers from the depressed classes themselves.

Only one final appeal I wish to make ; and I request that I might be permitted to do it. When the non-brahman movement, after stirring under the surface for some time, came into view, a distinction was made very early between the pro-brahman non-brahman



and the pure non-brahman; and I wish to observe that in every progressive movement there will be these two types of persons, *viz.*, the subdued souls and the ardent spirits. The subdued souls will appear mealy-mouthed to the others, even as the ardent souls will strike the former class as vixen-tongued. We should put up with these differences. Let it not be said of members of the so-called higher castes that they have fomented such difference between the members of the depressed classes, that they have employed some of these people to their own advantage, as it was said, I do not know with what justice, that when the distinction was made between the pro-brahman non-brahman and the non-brahman proper, the brahman used the pro-brahman non-brahman as his own instrument for pitting one section against the other. I hope there will be no such unfortunate situation; but we shall pledge ourselves, despite all differences, to step forward and devote ourselves to this work of the elevation of the depressed classes. Sir, in this connection I am reminded of a great

saying of that world-renowned teacher of practical morals—Sadi, the author of *Gulistan*: ‘Wouldst thou conceive the plight of an ant under thy feet, imagine thine own plight under the feet of an elephant’. It is that imagination that we will have to exercise, that imagination which will beget in us the higher charity of which it was said that it would not only give but also forgive. Let us proceed on this principle. Then alone shall we render justice to these depressed classes.

One last word, Sir, and I have done. During the early period of that noble quest which led to the *Maha Nirvana*, the final emancipation, it is said that Prince Siddhardha, when returning, a certain evening, from a visit to an *asramam* on a hill-top, fell among a flock of sheep, wherein he found this pathetic spectacle. There were two lambs, one strong and sound of limb capering ahead from boulder to boulder with the other lambs, and the other, weak and crippled and lagging behind in momentary danger of being lost sight of altogether.

The poor mother, divided between these two young ones, was now rushing forward to meet the healthy lamb and again hastening back to see whether it might enable the crippled one to keep pace. Sir, at this juncture, as Siddhardha noted this moving sight, he lifted the crippled lamb and said: 'Mother, thy heart has been divided between the two young ones. I have taken the crippled one in my arms. I will enable it to keep pace with the rest of the flock. Let thy heart be at peace'. The heart of Mother-India is now similarly divided between the progressive classes and the depressed classes; and I appeal to these and other spirits of light and leading to play the part of Siddhardha, lift the depressed classes to their bosoms and address *Bhuratha Matha*, "Let thy heart be at peace; we will take care of them".

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## XV

### ANTI-NON-CO-OPERATION.\*

(1921)

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GENTLEMEN AND FRIENDS,

As we are met here on this solemn occasion, our thoughts and feelings first turn towards Him—the All-holy and All-merciful One—who is the Indweller in every heart and the guiding Light on every path. We bow to Him and we praise and glorify Him—the Oracle that ordains our duties and the Providence that shapes our destinies—that He has assigned unto us this humble but responsible duty and has disclosed unto us the whitherward of our destiny for the present. May His awe-inspiring yet soul-sanctifying Presence be with us here and hereafter, that we may live our days and employ our energies as under His all-witnessing eye!

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\* Presidential Address, Godavari Anti-Non-Co-operation Conference (17-9-21).

Permit me, my good friends, to thank you heartily for inviting me to this seat of honour, albeit of responsibility. Would that I had powers and capacities adequate to the occasion! But my sincere sympathy with the objects of this Conference and my ardent desire to be of such little service to you as it may be possible for me to render, have overcome my original diffidence and reluctance; and here I stand before you as your humble servant. My shortcomings, neither few nor small, will be graciously overlooked by you; while your thoughtful and generous co-operation will lighten the task for me.

I crave leave to congratulate the organisers of this Conference on their sense of duty and sentiment of patriotism, which alone could urge them to undertake this work, neither light nor over-pleasant, of convening an Anti-Non-Co-operation Conference for the Godavari District. I am sure that they have spared no pains to deserve success; and now it is for you, under God, to make the Conference a real success. That, in this season of taxing labour, you should have

made it convenient to respond to this invitation so cordially and to muster in such numbers, again merits the heartiest praise; and on behalf of the Reception Committee, I tender warm and sincere thanks to you all. May God bless you and yours!

Gentlemen, I do believe that, alike in place and in time, this Conference has been very wisely designed. I have no doubt that a gathering of this type, at the present juncture and at the heart of Andhradesa answers a great need. I am hopeful that the proceedings of the day will, by God's grace, amply justify that belief; and I expect that the hint (if I may so put it) given here and today will be eagerly taken up all over this part of the country and result in real good to the land. I shall return to this presently.

Turning to the business of the day, I take it as the unanimous desire of this large assembly that we respectfully accord a loyal and cordial welcome to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, and convey our dutiful

and grateful sense of appreciation and thankfulness to our King-Emperor for this further token of His Majesty's interest in, and affection for, the people of this part of his Empire. The noble message which our beloved Sovereign graciously vouchsafed to us last year through his honoured uncle, a message of peace and good-will, of sympathy and encouragement, has inspired a new aspiration and kindled a new hope in this ancient land; and the ensuing visit of a worthy scion of an illustrious House will (God so grant it!) serve greatly to intensify that inspiration and to brighten that hope, and thus, to augment the respect and the devotion which the documents of the great Queen Victoria always command everywhere in India. It is, moreover, fit and proper that this emphatic protest against the very improper proposal to "boycott" the Prince's visit—the first protest of its kind, I believe, from this Presidency—should be entered even in one of these "northern districts" to which His Excellency the Governor alluded, in sympathetic sadness, only the other day.

However, it is certainly not to soothe a displeased Governor but wholly to sustain the established traditions of the Telugu country for its devotion to the Throne and co-operation with the Government that we shall adopt this resolution of a hearty welcome to the Prince. For, it is common historical knowledge that, when the foundations of the British Indian Empire were being laid, the Gentoo (Telugu) sepoy fought and died that a great task might be achieved. Of the small but sturdy army that won the victory at Plassey the detachment from the Coromandel Coast formed a valuable section. If, as a historian has observed, the key-stone in the arch of the Company's martial fame was furnished by the Indian Army, the soldiers of proved hereditary prowess drawn from a series of military centres between Chicacole and Ongole constituted no mean part of that key-stone. Personally, as the descendant of three generations of officers in the Indian Army, I may be pardoned if I dwell here with some reverent sentiment on the memories of those 'forebears' of



mine and their comrades who, with an instinctive appreciation of the real situation, rallied and fought under the banner of those whom Providence had ordained to be the deliverers of their country alike from external dangers and internal dissensions. No mean mercenaries for sordid gain were they ; but true-hearted, though humble-positioned, agents in a great fight that was to bring peace into the homes and hope into the hearts of India. It is, therefore, I repeat, as it ought to be that this protest against misguided zeal and this welcome to merited worth should emanate from this large gathering at the centre of the Telugu land. And with how many solid claims to cordial hospitality does the Prince come to this part of the Empire ! No doubt, the Royal House may be—and rightly, too—above party politics. But they are much mistaken who suppose that the sovereign, in a constitutional monarchy, has no appreciable share in shaping the real policy of the realm. Even because he is a constitutional monarch, alike the prime source and the first sanction of law and order, his word

weighs and his example tells, at a crisis, with surpassing effect. And history records no instance of this fact more outstanding and more praiseworthy than that Proclamation of Queen Victoria which is deservedly prized as the Great Charter of Modern India. Just recall the memorable words of that noble sovereign Lady, one of the earliest and most earnest of our nation-builders, to Lord Derby, clearly defining, and effectively enjoining, the inspiring nature of the great message to India—to wounded and exhausted India; and that message, right from the heart of a sorrowing queen to her afflicted people, is sure to be immortalised as an epoch-making pronouncement in the history of the race. That royal proclamation, promulgated by the revered great grand-mother of the Prince, was successively re-affirmed by his illustrious grand-father and exemplified in a great Act of Reform by his august father—an Act of Reform that, as the Viceroy rightly observed, rang out the reign of autocracy in India. These titles to India's devotion and gratitude which the Prince may justly advance for his

Royal House need never fear even a searching comparison with similar claims urged on behalf of any other dynasty that ever held sway over this land. Let us, therefore with confidence and with affection, convey our cordial greetings to His Royal Highness in the hope that his visit will be productive of great good towards strengthening the bonds of union—of equality and fraternity—between the several members of the great Empire.

I will next return for a few minutes to the subject I have already touched upon—namely, how apt and opportune this conference is. A moment's pause and consideration will make it quite clear that the movement of co-operation—thoughtful and trustful co-operation—with the Government, which this Conference seeks to inaugurate, in this district, is a real need at the present time. In the first place, not only has His Excellency Lord Willingdon recently referred to the northern districts as being comparatively more affected by the current agitation than many other parts of the Presidency, but also our good friends in Madras and further south speak

of us living in these parts, be it a compliment or a complaint, as being markedly more responsive to the present-day political stir and sensation than they have been. It is also reported that Mr. Gandhi and his *confreres* have been impressed with these districts as a decidedly more promising field for their work. That these observations have some measure of truth may not be denied. To whatever causes the difference may be due, it cannot but be admitted that this and the neighbouring districts have been set more agog by the non-co-operation activities than the adjacent regions. The main immediate cause, perhaps, lies in the vernacular journals widely circulating hereabouts. The saving grace is that with the bulk of the people the shibboleths of the movement are more a fashionable cant than a reasoned conviction; and it will be the mission of this Conference and its like that may be expected to follow to restore the balance of public opinion to a correct appreciation of the true interests of the country. Secondly, to my mind, it is more than probable

that within the next few months there will be started, with redoubled vigour, a fresh wave of agitation and excitement; which all well-wishers of peace and order will feel vitally interested in opposing and retarding. Is it not a notorious fact that the non-co-operators have not so much been steadily advancing in working out their programme, item by item, as they have been hopping from point to point mainly to keep up the excitement? And this characteristic procedure they are very likely to adopt before long, especially in connection with the unfortunate Malabar revolt and, to a certain extent, also in connection with the Prince's visit. That deplorable occurrence on the West Coast has put the non-co-operator very much out of countenance, at any rate, in well-informed circles; and the disfavour is sure to filter down to the masses. To counteract this mishap frantic efforts are pretty sure to be made—and we already perceive the first ripples of the coming flood—so to present the whole story of that dire tragedy as to cast the responsibility and the blame for

it on the Government. They may strain every nerve, as they may use every device, to delude the people into the belief that every occurrence connected with that thrice sad tale of devastation is traceable, directly or indirectly, to the apathy, the weakness or the viciousness of a God-forsaken government. The proclamation of martial law, the measures taken in administering it, the subsequent trials, may all come in for unmeasured condemnation; and thus the Malabar revolt may constitute a fresh indictment of the Government, already arraigned for the Punjab disturbances. Thereby a situation and a plea may conceivably be created for demanding a prompt enforcement of the items in the non-co-operation programme hitherto discreetly held over for a more rousing campaign; which may culminate in the next Congress session hoisting the 'charka'-adorned flag of a national republic under whose mandate taxes may be refused and civil disobedience may be practised. If the past be a sign-post to the future, this forecast is not pure fancy or sheer panic. It

behoves, therefore, a conference like this to concert all legitimate measures to forewarn and thus forearm an unsophisticated populace against the impending dangers. For this reason and as designed for this object, this Conference is as timely as it is purposeful. May it realise its clear duty and prove equal to the task before it !

For the immediate purposes of this Conference it is hardly necessary to dilate on the theory or the ideal of Mr. Gandhi's Hind-Swaraj to be attained, within a year, through non-violent non-co-operation. As expounded, or, rather, adumbrated, in his writings and speeches, it is such an amazing admixture (perhaps, one may borrow Mr. Gandhi's phrase, "incompatible mixture") of fact and fancy, of soaring sentiment and inconclusive inference, that the average reader is more mystified than enlightened by the teaching. For all the world, it is (if I may say so without disrespect) something like the syren's song of the Greek legend. "The man for wisdom's various arts renowned " may venture to hear it, with the precaution of being securely fastened to the

mast of his ship ; but unto the work-a-day voyager on the main of life safety lies in the plugged ear. And methinks that much avoidable harm—no doubt, intermingled with some desirable good—has been worked even because an over-cautious government or an over-awed public permitted this seductive song—rather, its reverberating echo, all the more misleading for its being an echo—to be freely heard by the unwary populace. Anyhow, in its practical applications the movement is familiar—perhaps, a trifle too familiar—to quite a large number of those present. Yet certain aims and aspects of the movement, as it actually works, may call for a brief reference, even by way of reminder or caution. Let us then endeavour to have a view of the real aim of the movement, unobscured by any of its misleading incidents. It is to be feared that a good many—perhaps, a large majority—of those that come under the spell of the movement are obsessed with its ostensibly harmless, if not commendable, objects. Most persons that profess an interest in the affair thus



fail to bestow adequate attention on its ultimate injurious purpose. To give a 'national' turn or tone to the educational system by laying necessary stress on neglected elements of national culture; to mitigate the evils of law's delay and waste by encouraging a prompt and inexpensive settlement of differences by private arbitration; to dispel the curse of drink through persuasive social pressure; to arrest the country's impoverishment by stimulating self-help as regards the second great need of life (*i. e.*, cloth)—how sensible, how patriotic, how laudable do these objects and endeavours appear! But, a moment's pause and reflection will make clear its ulterior aim of paralysing the Government. "To destroy" the existing Government—nothing short of that—will satisfy its prime movers. Let us never lose sight of that stern fact. Let us test and try every proposal and every activity in relation to that one fact. Again, the omissions of the working programme are equally significant. Self-purification of the nation demands the picketting of liquor-shops;

but it does not demand the picketting of houses of ill-fame! Simplification of the national life calls for the boycott of courts; but it does not taboo railways, though repeatedly characterised as a sin and a snare! The key-note of the matter is: rivet attention on what will cripple the Government; wink, at least for the present, at what is a mere frailty of our own people. Even the Hindu-Muslim Unity shall be sustained by such props of policy. But as regards the Government, it is war to the knife: there patience is a sin; toleration, a curse! "Carthage must be blotted out." Let one illustration—and a small one, too—suffice. During a three-months' joint pilgrimage, whisper not one word about the cow to brother Shaukat Ali; but suffer not the Briton to stay in India unless he bow to Hindu and Muslim susceptibilities by giving up both beef and bacon.—Nor can thoughtful persons be misled by professions of non-violence. Is it not a notorious fact that, despite Mr. Gandhi's repeated asseverations, real non-violence—genuine tolerance or forbearance towards opponents—

is more a pious wish than a practised virtue? Ask those that have in their respective spheres—teachers in schools, members of councils and local bodies, or representatives of commercial interests—been endeavouring, through honest personal conviction, to co-operate with the existing order of things; let them freely and frankly relate their experiences; and how hollow these pretensions of non-violence will then look! Again, does violence consist only in unlicensed acts? Rajah Rammohan Roy named, as the two weapons of intolerance, the tongue of the spear, and the spear of the tongue. Which of these is sharper and crueller no gentleman needs telling. Further, how intimate, as cause and effect, as stimulus and response, is oftentimes the relation between the choleric word and the injurious deed! With his acknowledged character and position, Mr. Gandhi sows the wind in violent words like “godless” and “satanic”; and the country, in due course, reaps the whirl-wind in loot and riot. Here, I may be pardoned if I pause, just for a minute, to confess that as I read

some of these so-called non-violent non-co-operation writings and speeches, I am irresistibly reminded of Mark Antony's famous funeral oration with its refrain, " And Brutus is an honourable man!" And lastly, a careful perusal of certain portions of the literature on the subject, including some of Mr. Gandhi's own utterances, leaves one in doubt whether the prohibition of violence is really absolute—whether even the authoritative exponents of non-violence do not forbid only the rowdy's knife or the anarchist's dagger, while they would not positively disapprove of the crusader's sword, if it could only be drawn with decisive effect.

I have thus far endeavoured to point out the necessity for this Conference at this juncture, to define its purpose and its function, to urge the great duty owing to the Sovereign and the State, to dilate on the inner aim and the favourite methods of a movement that we are bound alike for ourselves and for the Empire to counteract; and to commend to your hearty approval the idea of cordial yet considered co-operation. Here rightly my task

might end ; nevertheless, I may crave permission to make a few further observations to show how the prospects are not so gloomy and circumstances not so irremediable as our brethren of the opposite camp persistently pronounce them to be, and to state how we stand to gain by pursuing a more peaceful and hopeful course.

How it is a justifiable position to hold that the country's political prospects are perceptibly brightening, I may illustrate even with a reference to the Punjab tragedy. There is none, Indian or foreign, with any pretensions to thoughtfulness and humanity but will mourn the fate of the unfortunate victims of mob fury or military ferocity. Again, there is none with the least vestige of culture and civilization in him but will condemn those who, intoxicated with power, discarded both sense and sensibility. Yet, if we read, with the eye of faith, the history of events since that dark day, we shall not fail to discern that even in the heart of that appalling evil there is a core of good which we shall do well to distil out and preserve

for the future. Let us exercise, for a little while, that calm reflection and that rich imagination with which the Indians are credited; and we are sure to discover India's lasting gain in India's temporary loss. Deep beyond human plumb-line are the ways of Providence; yet it would seem as though the Punjab catastrophe was a notable instance, to adopt the inspired words of India's noblest living poet—Asia's Laureate—an “insult transmuted into triumphant glory”. It was in the Punjab that the last great battle was fought for completing Britain's acquisition of India; and I do believe that it was again in the Punjab that, ere the lapse of the Biblical three score and ten years that make the full span of a mortal life, India's redemption was symbolically wrought out. While intensely resentful that even one single Indian was made to crawl on the belly, let us not miss the inner significance of that deplorable incident, as after-events warrant us to interpret it. . It was then for the last time that India was made to crawl in subjugation; thereafter, India has won

her birth-right to stand erect and to step forth. Dare any creature, robed in little authority, ever again ask an Indian to crawl on the belly, and escape being pilloried as a mountebank? Likewise, General Dyer admitted having heartlessly kept up the fire till his ammunition was exhausted. Let us view that massacre, revolting as it was, in the light of all that has been since said about it, either in just condemnation or in plausible condonation; and we shall again realise that with the exhaustion of General Dyer's ammunition was spent out all the ammunition in all the arsenals stored for such senseless purposes. The last round of cartridge then shot was as the 'crack of doom' to military terrorism for all time to come. Martial law may exist, but martial lawlessness is dead. After that terrific scene, he who would be a Dyer must be prepared to be paraded, before a pitying or execrating world, as a monster in human guise. Yes; let us once view those seemingly doleful events from the right stand-point, that is, with the searching eye of true insight; and

we shall behold in them the sanctified symbols, the authoritative tokens, of India's restored right to stand erect and to claim due treatment on the basis of "equal partnership and perfect racial equality". Thus interpreted, even this deep tragedy that has so agonised India's heart may prove the birth-throe of a new age. Shall we not take heart of grace, then, and believe that the dark night of India's degradation has passed and the coming day of India's exaltation has already dawned ?

While we thus seek to pluck consolation and even hope from our sorrows and to sight the vision of a renaissance even through the gloom of despondence, may we not address, in all frankness and in all friendliness, a reflection or two to the British rulers of India ? It may, indeed, be even remissness on the part of this Conference, heartily eager as it is to co-operate with the Government, if it neglects or hesitates to speak the right word in due season as regards the relationship that ought to exist between the Government and the people, that co-operation may be natural



and useful. The great chance for non-co-operation has arisen from the fact that, as the movement came to the fore, there was, as a set-off, so little of real co-operation to show between the rulers and the ruled. Quite true it may be that there was benevolence on the one part, and trustfulness on the other. But the period of guardianship and tutelage having been prolonged beyond the natural limits, as the crisis came, one party could not point to the proved advantages, nor the other recall the enjoyed benefits, of conscious co-operation and reciprocal comradeship. It looked as though the ruler commanded and the ruled obeyed by force of old custom ; and this condition could not quite resist the stress of the new push. Let us, therefore, understand how, the age of autocracy gone, the age of democracy can be saved from confusion and disruption only by a vigorous cultivation of the habit of mutual help and conscious co-operation on the basis of perfect equality. Again; in the matter of choosing fit partners to share in this great responsibility, the Government should evince keen

discernment and sound judgment. Of course, to the declared extremist—nationalist, as he styles himself—co-operation with the Government is anathema. The Government can, therefore, look for co-operation only from the moderates. But unless the true moderate is carefully sifted from the spurious, disappointment on the one hand and disgust on the other are sure to ensue. The true moderate—he who knows how to labour and to wait, who delights to do his duty and trusts to his partner's good-will to do his, who is loyal from a sense of the right and co-operates for the sake of general weal, who realises that raw haste is half-sister to delay, and who scorns to snatch an unfair opportunity—that true moderate is, by whole heavens, different from that make-believe moderate who is loyal from policy, who consents to co-operate under a contract with a consideration, who does not scorn to be an extremist but desists from the extremist's race simply because he is short-winded for it, and who, as the prodigal returned home, urges the first claim to the fatted calf. It is this opportunist moderate that

ought to be unhesitatingly shunned by all lovers of fair-play. It behoves the Government to be firm and clear on this point. On the other hand, Government would be well advised if it understood that the firm friends of the State—those that would always prove true as steel—were, in this land of agriculture, the ‘real sons of the soil’. Mr. Gandhi himself has recognised that his campaign of non-co-operation will fail, if the agriculturists fail him. Let the Government, in its turn, realise that its enduring support will ever come from those who owe their status and prosperity to the success of agricultural pursuits, whether *royees* or *ryot*. These stalwart men are the country’s bed-rock of stability; and on them must be founded the whole superstructure of the country’s prosperity. As I declare this, I rejoice to know, as I am thankful to appreciate, that this Conference derives its strength and prestige from those ‘true sons of the soul’.

Gentlemen, I shall close my remarks with reaffirming my thankfulness to you for inviting me to preside on this occasion.

Friends, to every feeling heart it must cause a pang to find that, at the present time, India is as a house divided against itself. It is within living memory that, in by-gone years, the whole nation felt and thought as one man, and the voice of the Congress was the voice of the people. But that day, when it seemed "bliss to have lived", is gone. Other counsels have since been prevailing. This division in the house Mr. Gokhale of honoured memory discerned and deplored even in 1909. "Every one knows", he then observed, "that during the past few years a new school of political thought has arisen in the country"; and while acknowledging the good points of the new school, he noted that its teaching was "in the first instance directed to the destruction of the very foundations of the old public life of the country"; and he correctly pointed out that its chief error lay "in ignoring all historical considerations and tracing our political troubles to the existence of a foreign government in the country". This radical error, then so frankly pointed out, has, however, gone on disseminating itself until

the Congress, depleted of a large section of its old, loyal supporters, is now under the inspiration and guidance of those that spare no pains and miss no opportunity to hurl the most furious denunciations not only at the British Government but also at English education and western civilisation. When Mr. Gandhi asserts that English education has served only to increase "hypocrisy", "tyranny" and other abominations or that the tendency of western civilisation is "to propagate immorality"; when Lala Lajpat Rai (as a recent speech reports) would prefer the rule of an Indian sweeper to the rule of a competent foreigner, there is a challenge to the country's good sense and judgment; and division or disunion is inevitable. But as in all other life, so in national life, agglomeration must yield place to disintegration; and the latter, in its turn, must be replaced by reintegration. Non-co-operation has thus, perhaps, its own time and place in a nation's life. That cannot, however, be the wild non-co-operation that curses the British government as 'satanic' and condemns

modern civilisation as "godless". Even the language of protest must be fairly balanced. And the non-co-operation (if that be the right term) that a sensible people may for a time tolerate is as the first impulse of full-fledged and well-bred youth—a desire to sally forth with an obligation to return home. That impulse is, therefore, not incompatible with, but is a true prelude to, hearty co-operation; for, after all, "co-operation is the law of life," as Ruskin has taught. And to declare that the co-operation of, or with, the British Government is indispensable, is not only no denial of Godhead but a correct appreciation of the presence of Godhead in the contemporary history of India and the Empire. In my view, the faith of Keshub Chandra Sen, 'confessed' half-a-century ago, ought still to be the current faith of the nation—the faith that England's sisterly invitation to India to rise from her age-long sleep and India's response to that invitation are both "providential", and that England's work in India, despite its numerous defects and drawbacks, is "not man's work, but a

work which God is doing with His own hand ". And, again, to my belief, Keshub Chandra Sen's hope, then foretold, ought still to be the nation's hope for the future—the hope that England and India may "one day be found to kiss each other as dear and beloved sisters and proceed hand-in-hand together into that Kingdom of Heaven where there is eternal peace and everlasting happiness ". May we all pray and labour for the advent of that sacred day—"the bridal time of law and love", when "the hawk shall nestle with the dove"!

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XVI  
THE ADI-ANDHRA PROBLEM.\*  
(1921)

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SISTERS AND BRETHREN,

I offer you my sincere thanks for your kindness in inviting me to preside at this Conference. I owe this privilege mostly, if not wholly, to your kind regard for me, out of all proportion to any merit in me. In fact, I appear now before you mainly as a substitute for one than whom you have no sincerer friend or more generous supporter : I mean the esteemed Rajah of Pithapuram. When the idea of holding this Conference was started, the good Rajah was approached with a request for both a liberal contribution and the great favour of presiding on this occasion. While responding to the appeal for funds with his characteristic liberality,

\* Presidential Address, First Godavari Adi-Andhra Conference, Amalapuram (1-2-21).



the Rajah was prevented by illness from acceding to the other prayer. Then it was thought desirable that I should endeavour to fill his place, so far as it might lie in my power. None of us here but should have been immensely pleased to see the Rajah presiding on this occasion. Denied that pleasure, we have to reconcile ourselves to the present situation. Even for a substitute I wish your choice had fallen on some one better deserving the appreciation ; especially if you could have selected one from your own community. However, for some reason or other, you have fixed upon a humble individual like me ; and prompted both by my own feelings of sincere affection for you and by the desire to defer to a wish so warmly expressed, I have consented after considerable reluctance. While conscious of my own unfitness for this place on other grounds, I may, however, claim this one commendation that I always endeavour to think and feel that I am one of you. Those that are acquainted with the details of my own domestic life may recall one happy

incident in this connection. I, therefore, once again heartily thank you for your kind invitation and earnestly beseech you to keep out from your minds the least touch of a notion that a distinguished stranger has condescended to oblige you, but wholly to believe that one, a humble individual, that is glad to claim kinship with you all in a real sense, has thankfully availed himself of this opportunity to be amidst his own.

Let us raise our hearts in thankfulness and gratitude to our Almighty Father that everywhere distinct signs of better times, of a happier future, for your community are evident. Apathy is yielding place to sympathy; the desire for unity is gaining in strength; justice and not compassion is being recognised as your due; the responsibility of Government in the matter of your uplift is being rather keenly felt; the so-called higher castes are being steadily awakened to the consciousness of the long-standing debt of love and service which they owe you; lastly, and most happily, among you is being kindled, though very slowly and feebly, a

longing, a yearning, to come to your own, to secure your rights, to shoulder your responsibilities—in a word, to take your legitimate position in the great Indian nation. For all these welcome signs of the times we have to render our whole-hearted reverence and obeisance to God.

Then, may I address a few words of advice and exhortation to you? Of course, there will be little or nothing new in what I have to say. The facts and ideas to be presented by me will be merely repetitions of what have been repeatedly stated with greater authority and, therefore, to better purpose by several, both those of other communities and those whom you count among your own brethren. Yet these facts and ideas are, I believe, of vital importance to you and will, therefore, bear repetition advantageously.

The first point on which I desire to lay great emphasis is the imperative duty resting on you to be unswervingly loyal to the King-Emperor and his rule. Say what others may to the contrary, never doubt the truth

that the British connection with India is not an accident of aimless chance, the infliction of an iron fate or the sport of a heartless demon. No; a thousand times, no. It is a wise and benevolent Providence that has put this ancient nation, with its great past and its vast possibilities, to school under the tuition and guidance of probably the most level-headed and statesmanlike of modern nations. Defects and drawbacks, errors and wrongs, there may be; aye, there are; but with its inspiring traditions, its justice-loving instincts and its invigorating institutions, the British nation has been designed by Heaven itself to be the maker of the future of our country—a free, united and prosperous India. Fancy not for one moment that the present system of administration is satanic, a sink of sin, a rule of Ravana, that should at the earliest possible time be relentlessly swept out and “cast as rubbish to the void”. A great structure of reconstruction on deep and broad foundations, with reliable and choice material, after a noble design, is being gradually raised; and you may take

it almost as a settled fact, a pre-ordained conclusion, that England's work in India is not going to be demolished as a hopeless failure; it will be continued from decade to decade till it has reached its culminating success in the complete amelioration, in the perfect happiness, of India. It is rather hard to believe that the spirit which denounces the British administration of India as satanic, as the *regime* of the devil, can have 'love' for its master-motive. At any rate, there is absolutely no occasion for *your community* ever to hesitate in cherishing and practising whole-hearted loyalty to the Sovereign and the Empire. Having said this, I shall not give more than a word or two to the terrific fit of excitement that is now convulsing the country under the name of Non-Co-operation. Manifestly, if not also avowedly, this explosion of indignation denotes, not a domestic dispute between India and England tending to a robust reunion, but an internecine strife aiming at the annihilation of the union. Non-violence is, no doubt, insisted upon: "apostolic blows and knocks" are

forbidden; as for anathema and excommunication, they are, of course, methods always recognised as perfectly legitimate for suppressing unholiness! Whatever plausible plea other communities may profess to urge, you, at any rate, have absolutely no reason or justification for resorting to this highly injurious and objectionable method of self-assertion. Your community has, through untold generations, been subjected to rigorous segregation in every respect. Your community has, during the whole of historic time, been treated by all the rest of the people in a spirit, as it were, of wholesale hereditary non-co-operation. What has your community to do in boycotting a Government to which primarily you owe what little of peace and freedom you may possess? Would not *your* adopting the Non-Co-operation programme look like a big joke: to desert schools that you are yet to enter; to discard professions that you are yet to adopt; to renounce titles that you are yet to get? Should you non-co-operate, then, in the assignment of avocations, what particular profession will, I

wonder, fall to your share? *Varnashramadharma*, which often figures as a half-sister of present-day Non-Co-operation, will exhort you to find your respectability and salvation in your hoary, "unnameable" professions. Join with the so-called superior castes in this campaign of Non-Co-operation; and you will be like the dwarf in the fable which narrates how a dwarf and a giant combined for joint adventures: the dwarf got all the beating, the giant scored all the fame!

I shall next exhort you earnestly to avail yourselves of the facilities, such as they be, that better times will open out to you for improvement. A great change—undoubtedly a most beneficent change—has been inaugurated in the administrative system of the country; resulting, as it has done, in the transfer of several branches of administration intimately connected with your fortunes to the custody of enlightened and responsible members of our own choice. The problem of your advancement is bound to receive increasing attention, and on every side the demand will assert itself that your community should

command all available resources for its uplift and progress. Schools, both for general and technical instruction, will rapidly spring into existence, and free admission into them of members of your community will be insisted upon as a prime condition ; better habitations in sanitary localities and with requisite accompaniments for the ordinary needs of life will be early sought to be provided ; participation in the rights and privileges of citizenship will be increasingly accorded ; endeavours to wean you from such objectionable habits as now hamper you will be earnestly made ; institutions calculated to relieve you from your abject poverty and save you from your helpless indebtedness, will be brought into existence rapidly and effectively : thus the future appears to be, under God, very reassuring. But none can help those who will not help themselves. The supreme effort to shake off your lethargy, to dispel your ignorance and superstition, to discard your objectionable habits, to improve your domestic and communal conditions and surroundings, must spring from the heart of the



community itself. You must apply your own shoulders to the wheel of progress. There must arise from amongst you men and women who, though not highly educated, will yet show a keen sense of responsibility and be actuated by a spirit of devotion to the great cause of the advancement of your community. Unless you make it clear by your endeavours and exertions that you are eager and earnest to elevate yourselves ; unless you are prompt and persevering in the discharge of this prime duty of self-help, and come out, in rapidly increasing numbers and in a spirit of disinterested patriotism, to awaken in your community a strong passion for education, a burning desire for self-improvement, a lively appreciation of cleanliness, temperance and thrift, you will fail to elicit the warm sympathy and strong support of the communities around you. You will likewise lie beyond the reach of Government which, necessarily conditioned by human limitations, will confine its activities to those whose zeal vindicates their claim to assistance and encouragement.

Having addressed this general exhortation to you to bestir yourselves, I shall specify a few items in the programme of self-improvement that demand your earnest attention. First and foremost comes education. So far as I have been able to gather information, your community constitutes about a fourth of the population of this District; and it works a much higher percentage in that part of it where we have met. Yet I learn that you are educationally so pitifully backward that, even of the few—exceedingly few—that resort to schools, hardly any one works up to the highest class in an Elementary School. This is simply deplorable. I am aware of the heavy poverty that weighs your community down; but I do believe that poverty is not wholly or mainly responsible for this lamentable state of things. Your illiteracy is due, I presume, not a little to your lack of appreciation and exertion. It goes without saying that the position and respectability of a community depends mainly upon the degree of literacy in it. Your condition cannot but be low and

helpless so long as you remain illiterate to this appalling extent. Under the new Elementary Education Act, which will, I expect, be shortly brought into force, very valuable opportunities will be afforded to all the communities and largely to your community for education and improvement. You must, therefore, bestow your most earnest attention on this question; namely, how you can expedite the spread of education in your community. In this connection, let me warn you against the possibility of pressure being brought to bear upon you to desist from asserting your birth-right in this vital matter. If there is even a modicum of truth in what one hears, every now and then, of the methods, the very sinister methods, that are employed by members of the so-called high castes to intimidate you and to scare you away, these unholy activities particularly to frustrate the attempts to advance your education are very likely to increase with a corresponding increase in the facilities for enlightenment. But take heart and stand upon your rights. The wise and benevolent

Government can only lay down principles and issue instructions ; it is for those whom such principles and instructions are designed to ameliorate to spare no pains in securing their fullest benefit. Whether a revival in all details of the old caste *panchayats* is or is not feasible or desirable it is not for me to say ; but I venture to suggest that, on this as well as on other matters relating to your uplift, a strong and healthy public opinion must be steadily created in your community. To this end a few select persons should, in every hamlet and village, assign to themselves the duty of constituting a social vigilance and social service league or fraternity, to call the slack to duty and recover the erring to the right path. It is, indeed, to be feared that hitherto Government and quasi-Government bodies have not done all that is due to you in the matter of education and uplift ; but I do trust that better times are coming. Even for the advent of those better times, the exertions of your own community are a pre-requisite. Demand as your right an adequate allotment

of funds with a separate organisation, both provincial and local, for the furtherance of education in all its grades among the depressed classes, not only through the establishment of schools (day and night) but also through a provision of pecuniary and other help, wherever needed, to enable eager but poor parents and guardians to give their children the best education available. Insist upon the bar of untouchability being completely removed. It will prove ultimately suicidal if you consent, or suffer yourselves, to be virtually segregated from other communities in the matter of education. Yield ground there and you will lose ground all-round. It is your elementary right, as equal subjects of the Sovereign and equal citizens of the Kingdom, to receive equal treatment with all other communities in this fundamental concern of education. Separate schools will mean scantiness of resources and inefficiency of management; thence, poverty of results and, in consequence, a handicap in the race. Let this, therefore, be your first demand

that you shall be treated alike with others, afforded the same facilities as others, nay, as a small recompense for the age-long neglect, slight and humiliation to which you have been subjected, you shall be accorded some special facilities and encouragement to serve as a start. You must thus ensure for your community the fullest benefit of the education-policy of the Government. In this connection one cannot but pause for a moment to reflect on the surprising Resolution of the Godavari District Board passed only about 2 months ago; according to which, in the opinion of that responsible body, it is undesirable to admit Panchama boys into the Board Elementary Schools, as such a practice leads to friction and retards the progress of education in all directions. I confess that it took me sometime to be able to persuade myself to believe in the possibility of such a preposterous Resolution being passed, we are told, unanimously by a body like the District Board of Godavari in the year of grace 1920. This District, associated with the honoured name of the late Rao Bahadur K. Veeresa-

lingam Pantulu Garu, is believed everywhere to take the lead in matters of social amelioration and advancement. Who knows but that our District Board may similarly give a brave lead to other districts in this matter of ensuring peace and all-round educational progress by excluding Panchama boys from Board Elementary Schools? Possibly, when the new District School Boards come to be constituted, great care will be taken to secure a strong muster of those wise men and brave that will unhesitatingly pursue this policy of avoiding friction and accelerating progress by excluding Panchama boys from admission into Elementary Schools. Nay, more; logic and policy will alike prompt the District Boards and kindred administrative bodies to extend the operation of this proposal—a proposal so sagaciously conceived to avoid friction and promote peace and progress—to all public institutions and concerns, such as highways, hospitals, post offices, registration offices, rest-houses, railway stations and what not; so that everywhere the caste people may, without the slightest danger to their sacred

scruples, pursue their occupations peacefully, while the Panchama, kept apart, of course, for his own good, will thrive in undisturbed isolation! What matters it if institutions are thus duplicated and expenditure is multiplied? Nothing can be too heavy a price to pay for peace and unretarded progress! The sanctity of caste which is the supreme concern of all wise laws must take precedence! It is urged that to force Panchama boys on caste people may be attended with grave consequences, may lead to disturbances, may create an atmosphere favourable to Non-Co-operation. This is surely an unforeseen extension of the policy of Non-Co-operation; for we are taught Non-Co-operation will ensue if a wrong is to be righted. One wonders whether this is a case of the wish being father to the thought. If the caste people are to resort to Non-Co-operation because wide-spread injustice is endeavoured to be set right, how shall we describe the legitimate action of those whose right to equal treatment is thus sought to be trampled down? Would not Non-Co-operation appear



too imbecile a method for the depressed classes to adopt in retaliation? Between these two fires, how enviable will be the position of Government! Again, this Resolution of the District Board appears to cut right across the policy of Government. Does the District Board intend and hope to change that policy? If the dark day ever comes when such short-sighted and selfish counsels prevail in the highest quarters, there will ensue catastrophic consequences which a hundred District Boards will never be able adequately to atone for. Happily, however, the weighty opinion of the Godavari District Board will not be the last word on this subject; and I trust that in duly authorised quarters this will receive close and early attention. [Since coming here I have learnt with pleasure of the assurance given you on high authority that Government will treat this Resolution with utter neglect.]

Closely connected with these questions of your education and of your alleged untouchability is that of your attitude to the caste system. The system is a huge labyrinth

in which all—high and humble—alike lose their way. If you desire genuine freedom—freedom of movement, freedom of ease and comfort, freedom of education and promotion—resolve once for all to set yourselves free—absolutely free—from its mazes. There can be no half-way halting-place; you can never make peace with this pernicious system. Your salvation lies only in complete detachment—absolute emancipation—from a system which is the direful spring of all your woes. Listen not to the siren-voice which seeks to delude you into the belief that within the caste system as re-organised—re-arranged and simplified—a really respectable position can be assigned to the Panchama. By the way, is not all talk about a *re-organisation* of the caste system meaningless? How can a system so utterly out of joint with modern times be reorganised? It has had its day; it must pass away. Where heredity is the basis of classification and conformity to customary rules of conduct, ever so senseless or superstitious, is the criterion of judgment, what conceivable possibility can there be for the

recognition of the rights and privileges of those on whom are imposed, with the sanction of religion and the support of entire society, rules and restrictions calculated at every turn to remind them of their hereditary inferiority? There is no place, absolutely none, for you within the caste system. There is nothing for it but that you cut your way out. As a small first step, firmly resolve on giving up whatever of caste prejudice or caste partiality there may linger in you, by freely associating with those whom you now falsely look down upon as your inferiors; apart from making up all differences, meaningless as they undoubtedly are, between one section and another of your community. Avail yourselves of all opportunities for the removal of every mark or indication of inferiority or degradation that this grievous system has placed upon you. Lose no chance when you can, by timily standing on your own legitimate rights, make it clear that you are fully alive to your own self-respect. Of course, no one will seek or wish to infuse an undesirable spirit—for example,

one of pride or of vehemence—into any member of your community. But pride is one thing, self-respect is another. Firmness is one thing, vehemence is another. Likewise, humility is one thing, servility is another. Liberty is one thing, impudence is another. Cultivate manly virtues, while carefully resisting every temptation to yield to unsocial or unbecoming weaknesses. Thus you will achieve your life-object by liberating yourselves from the meshes of the caste system.

Akin to these is the subject of the responsibility, a very sacred responsibility, that rests on you to give up every habit or practice that places you at a discount in the social values. Drunkenness is a vice that is, in certain respects, the most injurious. It not only wastes money but also unnerves the system and injures the moral tone. Thus the drunkard loses in substance, in body and in mind. In the wake of this evil habit comes a number of other harmful practices which discredit the person in respectable society and minimises his chances in the

struggle for existence. Again, cleanliness in person, in habits and in surroundings has very beneficial effects not only upon the individual but also upon the general community. It helps, as nothing else can, to overcome prejudices based upon an over-sensitive notion of personal purity. Untouchability is, no doubt, a heresy for which the so-called higher castes are eternally condemnable. But uncleanness is a drawback, a defect, which shifts some of that blame, at least ostensibly, to your shoulders. This, therefore, demands your next attention. These two virtues—temperance and cleanliness—ought to help to remove at least fifty per cent of the disabilities under which you now labour. They will take away all possible excuse from those who pretend to hold you aloof on grounds hygienic or social.

Oftentimes exhortations are addressed to you to adhere to (to respect, to honour and to follow) the religion of your forefathers. It is not for me to question the good faith of those exhortations. But I would ask you to ponder what the exhortations in actual prac-

tice amount to. If they mean that you must be content to hang on the outermost fringes of the so-called religion of your ancestors: to seek no right to come within a reasonable distance of any place of worship; to keep scrupulously aloof from every quarter of the town inhabited by the so-called higher castes; to hold it sacrilegious to learn something of the sacred contents of the national scriptures; to be satisfied with listening, and pinning faith, to mythical stories that in your unrelieved subordination lies your salvation; then one need feel no qualms of conscience in advising you to leave such a religion severely alone. The late Swami Vivekananda of honoured memory is said to have declared that, before he passed away, he would see Panchamas installed as priests in fifty different shrines of note all over the land. The great teacher did not live to make good his intention; and one may well doubt whether, granted even a patriarchal age, he should have been able to achieve the task. But let us accept his intention as a prophesy and let us say that then alone the

Panchama has a place in Hinduism, then alone Hinduism is entitled to his allegiance, when priesthood is ordained solely on the ground of personal fitness ; and a Panchama is as readily eligible for that sacred office as a member of any other community.

Only another aspect of this question is the relation in which you should stand to such of your sisters and brethren as may give up the so-called Hindu religion and go over to Christianity. As I was reading the other day the address, in other respects a thoughtful one, of the Chairman of the Reception Committee delivered at the Masulipatam Conference on the 9th of January, it appeared to me as a false note that the gentleman should have spoken in such disparaging terms of Christian converts from your community. The late Hon'ble Dewan Bahadur Raghunadha Rao once declared at a public meeting that the salvation of the depressed classes lay in their becoming Christians first. That an ardent Hindu like that venerable gentleman should have made this admission was, indeed, very significant. I do not, of course, quite

agree with that view. I do believe that gradually, may be very gradually, Hinduism will be so remodelled, will so broaden and refine itself, as to become the saving faith of all communities including the Panchamas. But as circumstances stand at present, it need be no matter for comment or sneer if many a poor but slightly educated Panchama should be led to think as the great Dewan Bahadur Raghunadha Rao did. Nor would it be just and fair to them to think that most of these converts were lured by social or material attractions. Given no religion worth the name, no faith that enters into and uplifts the life, where they were; on the other hand, receiving a cordial call to a God who, they are taught to believe, took special care and thought of the humble and the erring; they may naturally accept that gospel in good faith; and it will only confirm their belief when as the direct result of that acceptance come social amelioration, educational advancement and material improvement. Forced conversions being out of date, an appreciable number of



persons give up a religion only because that religion has given them up. After all, if you accept my view that only through a total abnegation of the oppressive caste system can you liberate yourselves, a change of faith accepted as an honest conviction need place no obstacle between the Hindu and the non-Hindu as regards social amenity and civic co-operation. It will be to the gain of both that they agree to differ as to their religion but combine and co-operate in achieving their joint advancement educationally, socially, morally and economically. By all means adhere to your own faith, if you are satisfied with it; but ape not the undesirable manners of the so-called higher castes by turning your noses at the Panchama Christian. Victims of religious and social ostracism, be not yourselves guilty of that sin. I should, on the other hand, exhort Panchama Christians, if there are any present, not to allow their acceptance of another faith to lessen, in the slightest degree, their sense of attachment and their burden of obligation to their kith and kin in the Hindu

fold. However improved by trimming and pruning and even grafting, let them recognise their old ancestral stock. Let them remember that charity is the highest law of their faith and "charity begins at home". I know of families where hearty relations continue to exist notwithstanding diversity of faith. What is found possible practically in individual cases ought to be made possible as between communities. My last exhortation in this connection is to those who may, by God's grace, achieve their own improvement socially and educationally above the general level of the community. It is distressing to hear that some of these few fortunate members of the caste selfishly seek to safeguard their own position and respectability by looking askance at, if not by wholly keeping aloof from, the rest of the community. This is, to say the least of it, unmanly. Manliness will disdain to fight shy of its origin, however humble. Courage lies in facing the situation in a spirit of complete self-denial. These erratic persons can never delude others into the belief that

they are a separate and higher caste. It is only the general uplift of the caste that will secure real recognition and appreciation. Till then such doubtful individuals will be treated like the bats in the fable, until they boldly take their stand by their own kith and kin and, giving up all vulgar hankering for places and positions, seats and votes, devote themselves wholeheartedly to the advancement of those who are flesh of their flesh and bone of their bone. Thus united, you will achieve the great destiny of your community in a manner and at a pace which it will not be possible to command without such union.

Sisters and brethren, I have in these stray remarks placed before you such considerations as I feel merit your attention. There are several subjects relating to your improvement: such as grants of lands on encouraging terms, formation of Co-operative Societies, adoption of certain healthier methods of living, improvement of your moral and social habits and the like that do deserve consideration. But I am confident that all

these subjects will receive adequate treatment in the resolutions to follow. Let me, therefore, conclude by exhorting you to have faith—faith in God, faith in a well-intentioned Government, faith in the good men of all communities, faith in yourselves as children of God and faith in a just cause, namely, the emancipation of your community from its crushing disabilities, even because right is with you, coming times are in your favour, and the great moral law that governs the world must operate on your behalf. With this faith, receive hope—hope that even the darkest night must yield place to a glowing dawn; hope that you who have toiled and laboured and waited for ages will have your reward in the combined and ceaseless endeavours of all parties and of all communities to render back to you, as a mere debt long overdue, their fullest measure of love, sympathy and service, till the lowly be exalted as the highest and the neglected be proclaimed the dearest unto God. Once again I very heartily thank you for your kindness in inviting me to preside; and I wish the Conference God-speed!

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## XVII

### PRAYER:

#### ITS UNIVERSALITY AND ITS POTENCY.

(1924)

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In his 'swan-song', Arthur—the sovereign-saint whose life pictures the holy war waged by soul against sense—exclaims :

“For what are men better than sheep or goats,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer?”

It is, indeed this *lifting up* of hands, with the lever-power of prayer, that marks man out from his fellow-creatures: that, in Martineau's felicitous phrase, separates man, 'not by mere gradation, but by a virtual infinitude, from other races here' and, in fact, carries him 'beyond the classifications of species altogether'. If, as Max Muller has observed, language—articulate speech—is our Rubicon which no animal can cross, it is incalculably truer that prayer—the 'converse' of the human heart

with its Maker and Mentor—is our pathway to that Realm of Realities into which no animal can trespass. Man speaks because he is ‘noble in reason’; man prays because he is ‘infinite in faculty’. Speech is man’s reaction to the creation; prayer is man’s response to the Creator. Man takes in the world of sense with his speaking capacity; man transcends that world with his ‘praying’ strength. Hence, through all the processes of the ages, through all the stages of his evolution, man has heard a call imperative from without and has felt an urge irrepressible from within to pray—to let his voice ‘rise like a fountain night and day’. At all times and in all climes, under all conditions of existence and along the whole line of his activities, man has believed in, and cultivated the spirit of, prayer. Childhood with its innocence, youth with its hope, manhood with its dutifulness, age with its insight—all have uniformly prayed. Prayer has been the invariable language of the universal petition of weakness for strength, of want for relief, of struggle for endurance, of

penitence for pardon, of ignorance for wisdom, of doubt for assurance, of power for right-doing, of faith for grace. In one word, prayer has, everywhere and always, been the spontaneous expression of that 'reverence' which is the apex-virtue of man.

No doubt, objection has oftentimes been raised against this distinctively human habit of prayer: God rules, it is urged, by unalterable laws which no human importunity can change; God possesses an all-comprehensive knowledge which no human intimation can inform. The objection, however, misses the ultimate object of prayer; it fails to appreciate the one supreme result which prayer is calculated to further. That God governs by unalterable laws is granted on all hands. But man does not always realise, with equal vividness, the fact that God's laws can be unalterable—are, in other words, capable of uniform application—just for the reason that they are actuated by goodness and designed by foresight. An unalterable law that guarantees no benevolence and that emanates from no wisdom would, if the

phrase be permitted, be a veritable "Jagan-nath car" propelled by blind fate—a portentous thunderbolt hurled by furious whim. It might, further, be held as an impregnable position that no rule could endure, could hold good, from age to age, were it not attended with wisdom and goodness. Lacking wisdom, it would aberrate, self-confounded; lacking goodness, it would collapse, self-condemned. That creation is a unity in its organisation and a growth in its evolution, unmistakably points, however, to wisdom as the channel-bed and to goodness as the fountain-head of this world-current of life. The laws which govern this process are, therefore, the ways of a wise and benevolent Deity; and prayer denotes man's perpetual pledge that his intellect shall be taught to own and to copy that wisdom, his emotion shall be trained to receive and to transmit that benevolence, and his will shall be perfected by self-dedication to the one through self-surrender to the other. In fine, the fruit of prayer is the discovery of man as the 'image' of God. It is altogether foreign to its



purpose either to doubt the wisdom, or to deflect the ways, of the Supreme One. As a very thoughtful writer suggests, the Divine, like every wise human, Parent employs the very laws and methods of nature, profoundly wise and benevolent as they are, to grant the requests of the child. Every prayer granted is meant, and can tend, only to justify the ways, and to endear the spirit, of God to man.

It is, however, well that we clearly recognise how, like every other spiritual faculty, the spirit of prayer is subject to steady evolution—to an upward trend from one stage to another. According to a well-known formula, the ‘ascent’ of the human to the Divine Self is marked by five different stages—the silent ‘awareness’ of the creature, the humble duty of the servant, the faithful attachment of the friend, the tender affection of the child, the ecstatic union of the spouse. Conformable to the stage attained will be the immediate concern and the surface-expression of the spiritual engagement named prayer. Hence, prayer may

seem to be prompted by fear; then it may wear the guise of flattery; and again it may assume the voice of faith—of trust and resignation. But the inherent, redeeming virtue of this God-gifted faculty gradually transmutes the incidents of form and expression, till fear is sublimated into awe, flattery is refined into praise, and faith is perfected into self-surrender. When this happy consummation is attained, the devotee disdains to propitiate, scorns to flatter and is discontent even with 'faith'. His sole purpose in life—the dearest desire of his heart—is to be "in tune with the Infinite". What constitutes the fundamental difference between man and the rest of creation? Objects commonly termed inanimate mechanically obey the laws of God; animals usually styled 'lower' instinctively conform to the laws of God; man finds his supreme prerogative in consciously accepting the laws of God—in adopting them knowingly, willingly and cheerfully. The moral sense in man can function only through man's voluntary affiliation, and his self-determined

subordination, to the ways of God. The two theories of speculative thought regarding man's moral responsibility—summed up in the two words, pre-determination and free-will—may appreciate a practical reconciliation—a helpful *rapprochement*—through this conception of prayer. The ways of God are certainly unalterable; yet may not free-will have been vested in us in order that, of our own free choice, we shall, in an ever-increasing measure, draw the inclinations of the finite into line with the purposes of the Infinite? “Our wills are ours to make them Thine!” Likewise, the spirit of prayer may discern a lofty significance—a ‘far-off interest’—in the trials and ordeals of life. Is not a reassuring suggestion conveyed by the striking thought that trouble drives man to prayer and then prayer drives trouble out? Aye, is not the wisdom of the ages concentrated into the blessed experience of a God-possessed soul that God gives us the cross and then the cross gives us God? Prayer—genuine, absorbing prayer—marks the progress

of the pilgrim-soul from the cross to the God-head.

There are three distinct (though not separate) elements comprised in the complete practice of prayer; and they form, as it were, the tripos of an adoring soul: namely, reveal Thy nature unto me; vouchsafe Thy strength to follow the light revealed; and do Thy will—or rather, realise Thy spirit—in me.

(1) God undoubtedly knows all our wants. But prayer is the proof that we have come to realise—to know and to feel—our want of God. It is an avowal of our preparedness—the craving of our heart and soul, aye, the consuming hunger and thirst of the spirit—for ‘light, more light.’ “Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth”; and “in Thy wisdom make me wise.” This occasions, this leads to, *revelation*.

(2) Next, there is the purposive desire—the aching appetite—to absorb and assimilate the in-flowing light. Thus alone is the consciousness vividly acquired that the light graciously vouchsafed is incalculably

precious and has to be faithfully reflected and lovingly rendered back. "Create in me a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within me". This stimulates, this makes for, *regeneration*.

(3) Last comes self-surrender. An existence separate from God is insufferably oppressive. 'Do Thou, O God of Love, 'resume' me!' In this commingling of Spirit with Spirit—what I have been, 'may He *within* Himself make pure!'—the God in man is evoked ; nay, the human is transfigured into the divine.

"Take myself, and I will be  
Ever, only, all, for Thee."

This constitutes, this culminates in, *realisation*.

The story of Dronacharya and Ekalavya signifies how the adoring disciple acquired mastery in the art of archery even through soul-deep devotion to the image of the inspiring *Guru*. The image only symbolised the vitalising process whereby the essence of Dronacharya, embosomed in Ekalavya, grew and expanded through ardent devotion to the

*spirit* of the Master. So also, even more so beyond words, all that is true and pure and holy is infused through the inspiration, and realised through the grace, of the Living God, as a result direct from, as a response evermore to, the worship of Him 'in spirit and in truth.' Therefore, pray with trust, pray without ceasing, till the practice of prayer terminates in that rapt communion with the True, the Wise and the Blissful which leaves no residuum of the 'me'—the little self—save the ecstasy, the beatitude, of holy enjoyment. Thus will come true the glowing words of a spirited writer as regards the potency of Prayer, that it can 'turn flesh into spirit', 'metamorphose nature into grace', 'fetch earth up to Heaven'.

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SERVICES  
AND  
SERMONS.





I  
SERVICE :  
NEW YEAR'S DAY :  
ITS BOUNTIES AND BENEDICTIONS.  
(1916)

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UDBODHANA.

Hymn—*Bhajo madhura Hari nama nir-anthara* (Hindi).

Unto the Supreme, Omnipresent, All-Protecting *Hari*, our Parent and Patron, our Guide and *Guru*, our ever-guarding Protector and ever-near Friend ; unto Him be praise and glory, salutation and obeisance ! Glory, glory, glory unto the Supreme *Hari* for evermore ! United in praise and thanksgiving, we all sing, ‘ Glory unto *Hari*, the Supreme *Hari* ! ’ Here He stands on the golden threshold of the New Year with the open arms of greeting and welcome, with the open hands of boon and blessing, with the open countenance of cheerfulness

and affection, with the open heart of mercy and love, with unbounded power to protect, with unwearied compassion to tolerate, with unlimited tenderness to cherish, with infinite grace to bless. Unto *Hari* glory, glory, for ever glory! We bow down before Him; we prostrate ourselves at His footstool; we render 'our hearts' obeisance unto His majesty; we proffer our souls' adoration unto His holiness. With bent heads, with humble hearts, with reverent souls, we prostrate ourselves before Him, out of the profoundest love, gratitude and devotion. Who can count His blessings? Who can reckon the tokens of His love? Who can enumerate the gifts and boons of His providence? Who can ever relate the full story of His all-providing kindness? Who can take the measure of His limitless goodness? Poor mortals, puny creatures, is it conceivable that we can gauge the volume or estimate the worth of His clemency? He cherisheth us beyond our expectations; He loveth us beyond our conception. During one whole year, He has been plentifully, incessantly,

instantly, intently compassionate and merciful unto us. The very fulness, the unstinted abundance, of His goodness amazes and overpowers us. Steeped in His kindness, immersed in His benevolence, lost in His love, we cannot conceive the magnitude, we cannot comprehend the immensity of His providential interest in us. We are transfused with it; we are surcharged with it. The Ocean of Mercy is everywhere with us—above as protection, below as foundation, around as watchfulness, within as wisdom and bliss. His spirit animates and pervades—in and through it permeates, over and above it hovers, below and underneath it sustains. Truly He is the All-including and All-embracing God, in whom we literally live and move and have our being. Him we have come this evening not to praise and glorify: what can perplexed minds and dazzled eyes do towards that? We are met here to think unto Him, to feel unto Him, to talk unto Him, to own the abundance of His mercy in our intense sense of endless obligation and self-surrendering dependence. How merciful, watchful, protecting,

sustaining, cheering, unfailingly near, ungrudgingly kind, intimately dear has been the Lord ! How can we intelligently define, how can we appropriately describe, His greatness, His goodness, and His holiness ? Yet the heart is brimful and it must flow forth ; the soul is transfused and it must work out. Aye, the whole body quivers with the thrill ; and it can find repose only in the expression—the spontaneous, irrepressible expression—of heartfelt gratitude and soul-deep devotion.

#### ARADHANA.

Our own beloved God ! We desire to gather around Thee, to draw close to Thee, to touch Thee, to come into vital contact with Thee. Of all the delights, of all the feasts, of the whole hilarity, of this day, this is the crowning joy, the transporting rapture—that we can come to Thee, hold converse with Thee, look at Thee with confidence, talk to Thee with familiarity, make known our joys unto Thee, disclose our doubts and troubles to Thee, and declare, “ Truly Thou hast been good—abundantly and incessantly good—all these

many days, which have been marked by Thy mercy, signalised by Thy love and sanctified by Thy holiness, and which are now left behind in Thee to be our stock and our reserve, our past gain and tribute". How can we express all that we feel on this impressive occasion? Our hearts are full, brimming over, with the sense of Thy goodness. Thou hast been merciful beyond measure. With open hands Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings on us. Day and night Thou hast showered upon us limitless love and ceaseless grace. Oh beloved God! Thy clemency baffles calculation! The breeze that refreshes, the light that cheers, the music that exhilarates, the fragrance that enraptures, the converse with friends that rejuvenates—all these facilities and enjoyments of life are Thy bounties. In the lisp of children, in the greetings of men and women, in the fellowship of comrades and compeers, in the smile of beloved ones, in the solemn relations of the teacher and the learner, the director and the worker, the leader and the follower, in every walk, in

every concern of life, Thou art the care-taking, the protecting, the nourishing, the strengthening, the guiding God. Can human words ever adequately express the spirit's profound thankfulness unto Thee? Season succeeding season, each abundant in its gift and blessing—they form a chorus in praise of Thy might and mercy, Thy goodness and glory. And our souls join this universal hosanna of thanks and salutations unto Thee. As we realise Thy ever-wakeful interest in us and Thy ever-loving solicitude towards us, our hearts throb with thankfulness, our souls bow in adoration. Beloved God! Not alone in these common gifts, in these general bounties, dost Thou manifest Thyself through Thy parental care—Thy fatherly watch and Thy motherly attachment; but also—and even more—in unnumbered special ways Thou dost apply Thyself, Thou dost devote Thine own person, to each single one of Thy children, with all the solace and all the joy of love and of grace. Unto the erring how eager in reclaiming; unto the sinful how gracious in forgiving; unto the fallen how assiduous

in uplifting; unto the weak how merciful in strengthening; unto the needy how beautiful in contenting; unto the opulent how benevolent in serving; unto the heedless how ceaseless in warning; unto the faithful how constant in befriending—thus how Thou dost adapt Thyself to each one of Thy children! Perplexed, we turn to Thee; Thou dissolvest the difficulty. Way-lost, we call on Thee; Thou guidest our feet. Fallen, we cry unto Thee; Thou art prompt to lift us up. Proud, we forget Thee; Thou comest in Thy mercy to reveal Thy majesty. Ignorant, we bewilder ourselves; and Thy wisdom comes to dispel the darkness. The rugged path of struggling life Thou hast smoothed into the pleasant course of devoted pilgrimage. The wayward will Thou hast yoked to Thy purpose. The roaming mind Thou hast brought home to dwell in Thy truth. The lawless heart Thou hast trained into loving self-surrender. The wounded conscience Thou hast bound up into resolution and duty. The wearied soul Thou hast revived into trust and devotion. Thus, in a



thousand ways Thou hast met the wants and answered the appeals of each one of us. How can we sufficiently thank Thee? Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name!

Thou All-merciful God! How intimate, how endearing, how blessed are the relations which Thou hast so numerously created for us! As we behold the lovely lambs skipping and capering about and our hearts join in their hilarity, it is Thy spirit that links us to them. We hear the birds carol in endless glee and the brooks ripple in ceaseless play; and as we thus perceive Thy goodness and mercy, we feel our whole being quiver with indescribable joy—a joy which even the stormiest hour cannot blow away. There are the little children—the blessed cherubs!—who, as they glow with their own inner sunshine even in the dark day of suffering, impart a spring-time to our hearts. The jubilant youth, strong against odds, leaping forth from task to task and from triumph to triumph—they are a warrant and a proclamation that a living God governs and guides the world, shaping every life to a noble end. Likewise,

age, weighed down with time and care yet serene in the calm of self-realisation—that, too, gives a glimpse of the glorious hereafter. Thus through these different stages Thou presentest Thyself as the Ancient One of Days, old yet new, changeless yet fresh, familiar yet mysterious. And thus we are also taught that unto the soul there is no age, unto the spirit there is no infirmity. The senses may fail, the physical frame may vanish; yet the spirit for ever abideth in Thee. Man finding his sweetness in woman, woman finding her strength in man, children finding their security in the parents, parents finding their hope in the children, brother and sister feeling as the soul's twin each of the other—thus Thou hast filled the whole universe with strength and joy—secure strength and sure joy, each the other's complement in making the full round of a world of peace and happiness. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name! And amidst all the toils and trials, all the failings and sufferings, how Thou hast sustained the faith that, be the passing hour

terrific in its torment, surpassing all and subduing all there is the tender nursing, there is the fraternal succour, there is the prayerful benediction ; and above all, there is the hope immortal that the darling yielded up here is recovered as the angel hereafter ! But why need we migrate over the larger spaces of life to behold Thy goodness ? Even in the secluded niche of the inner self we find Thee for ever radiant, for ever regnant. The voice of conscience—how distinctly expressive of Thy personal interest and direct doings in the eternal progress of each soul ! The evangel which Thou art revealing in each soul ; the oracle which Thou hast set up in each bosom, that is a whole ‘ cloud ’ of living witness to Thy mercy and grace. Have not we, even these slumbering souls, heard Thy holy voice—now whispering in sweet approval, now resounding in stern reproof, now declaring that the Lord is the Supreme Sovereign whose will is the eternal law unto all, now proclaiming that unto His Majesty is due the homage of submission, to be enforced as a tribute, if not rendered as an offering ? Thou

art seated in each heart as the Supreme Lord, warning or cheering, goading or guiding, our steps towards the eternal destiny. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name! And, ever beloved God, how gracious Thou art in making us participators with Thee in the bliss of righteousness! Blundering, faltering, sin-stricken, it is yet given to us to feel that our God is the God of holiness and that we are destined, pre-ordained to be Thy children in righteousness, rich in wisdom and abundant in strength only as we become soldiers of righteousness. And Thou art righteous only to save. All Thy power to command and to subdue, is ever enlisted and employed in the cause of righteousness. The universe is founded on righteousness. Society is ordered in righteousness. The goal of man is righteousness. Offspring of Thy holy self, we are made the favoured partakers of Thy own nature, the fortunate inheritors of Thy own spirit; and for this we render our devout thanks unto Thee. Yes; the joy of communion with Thee; the bliss of inflow into Thy profound depths of righteous-

ness—who can estimate its real value or define its full import? Oh beloved God! we embrace Thee, we cling to Thy feet, we find our joy in Thy presence—Thou our haven, our asylum, our eternal abode, our everlasting home! We dwell in Thee, we delight in Thee, we feel bliss unutterable as we call Thee, “our own.” Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou now and for ever!

#### PRARDHANA.

Thou, the Parent of all living ones! We invoke Thy blessing, we fervently supplicate Thy blessing, upon all that have aided and befriended, sustained and supported us during the year that has just closed. We invoke Thy blessing on the sun, the moon and the stars above; on the solid steadfast earth below. They have been with us—served us, cheered us, indeed, blessed us, during this whole twelvemonth. Thy glory is revealed in the luminous orbs above; Thy strength is manifest in the solid globe below: we ask Thy blessings on them, even as they have been Thy blessings unto us. On the departing year with its untold tokens of Thy

goodness and grace, with its abundant opportunities for perceiving truth and practising love, we implore Thy blessing. Likewise, we supplicate Thy blessing on the in-coming year. May we hail the sun every morning and speed him every evening with a brother's affection and a friend's goodwill! And when the sun gives up, and the moon and the stars take up, the canticle of Thy providence, may we, time and again, lift up our eyes and hearts and respond, "The Lord be blessed of us and of you, and we be all blessed in the Lord!" May we daily direct our eyes and hearts to the globe below, where Thou dost picture Thyself in the golden harvest, in the fragrant flower, in the cheering verdure, in the smiling stream; and as we witness Thy mercies therein, may we invoke Thy blessing upon that manifold bounty which we, in our homely language, sum up in the word, the earth! Oh for Thy blessing—eternal blessing—on mother-earth! Also Thy blessing upon the beneficent clouds which carry the refreshing drink unto the parched lips and pour the balsam of life on the withering system, thus

transmitting the 'largess' of Thy love to Thy myriad creatures! Upon the seasons as they recur in unfailing regularity, in ceaseless activity, in happy sequence, in abundant goodness,—we invoke Thy blessing upon each of them: spring, the glow in our hearts; summer, the warmth in our veins; autumn, the feast unto our senses; winter, the repose unto our limbs—Thy blessing be on them all! Upon day, the rejuvenated life; upon night, the lulled life—upon day, the benignant smile of Thy affection; upon night, the caressing veil of Thy protection, we invoke Thy blessing. Upon the dumb animals—our mute co-sharers in Thy providence, as they toil for us, drudge for us, till for us, draw for us, run for us, cater unto us, like sisters and brothers, with nourishing food and refreshing drink—upon them all we invoke Thy blessing. May we learn to cherish them—not slight them as unthinking instruments, not smite them as unfeeling thralls; but esteem them as true tokens of Thy protecting care over us, and with cordial good-wishes invoke Thy blessing

upon them! Upon the several forces and powers of nature—the lightning-flash which sends the cleansing thrill through the murky air, the wafting-breeze which brings the message of a tender care, the rotations and revolutions of time through seasons, years and cycles, all witnesses of Thy changeless purpose—upon them all we invoke Thy blessing. Upon the various, voluntary, gratuitous services that we receive from Thy innumerable emissaries; upon all that tend to our comfort and happiness or conduce to our enlightenment and elevation—upon all these we invoke Thy blessing. Upon the skill of man which employs the forces of nature; upon the forces of nature, which bend to the skill of man, we invoke Thy blessing, as for them all we render thanks unto Thee. Upon the pavement-layer who makes the road to smooth our course; upon the lamp-lighter who illumines the path to ensure our footstep; upon the peasant who sows and reaps to provide the brotherly banquet for us all; upon the pilate who steers the ship to secure a safe voyage—upon every



servant of Thine who faithfully renders, through a loyal discharge of duty, an inspiring account of fidelity to Thy commandments, upon all these dear sisters and brothers we invoke Thy blessing. Upon those who stand for truth, upon those who fight for righteousness; upon those who succour the helpless, remember the neglected, rescue the oppressed, uplift the prostrate, heal the sickly, enlighten the ignorant, or reclaim the wayward—upon all these large-hearted, high-souled children of God, we invoke Thy blessing. Upon the bed of repose, the seat of rest, the table of study, the closet of meditation; upon the sleep that refreshes, the work that invigorates, the discipline that chastens, the fellowship that ripens—upon all these riches of routine-life we invoke Thy blessing. Upon the unnumbered facilities wisely devised and mercifully granted for our varied growth—all the appliances and accessories, all the occasions and opportunities, so providentially pre-arranged for our endless progress, we invoke Thy blessing. Upon the body which works

as a servitor day and night, upon the senses and the faculties—the many avenues to knowledge or equipments for service, upon them all we invoke Thy blessing. Upon the myriad contents of this limitless universe—all fitted into one integrated organism, a complete orb of existence, revolving round one divine purpose, moving towards one heavenly goal—upon this homogeneity, this harmony, this all-inclusive whole, we invoke Thy blessing. Upon all the sages and seers that have gone before, leaving behind for us the message of duty and the heritage of hope, we invoke Thy blessing. We praise and we glorify Thee for these countless bounties. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou and Thy name for ever !

#### DEEKSHA.

Our Creator and Protector, our Parent and our Patron, here we are met, in Thy bountiful mansion, in Thy hospitable home, to receive the new year's gifts and blessings from Thee. With grateful, worshipful hearts we receive all Thy bounties direct from Thy hand, and we bless Thee for them. The body

with limbs and organs fitted for diverse functions—for training and growth, for strength and service—this wonderful frame we receive afresh from Thee and render our thanks unto Thee for it. For the eye that sees, for the ear that hears, for the nose that smells, for the palate that tastes, for the sensitive body keenly responsive to touch and temperature—for every limb, for every organ, for every sense, we render thanks unto Thee as we receive it afresh from Thee. For the deep-sighted design that fits the various members into one composite mechanism, for all the aptitudes and adaptabilities which make the body the handiest help-mate of the spirit, we render thanks unto Thee. And as we receive these from Thee, we make the vow, we take the pledge, that they shall be used as Thy gifts and employed for Thy glory. Likewise, we receive all that appertains to the body—the priceless creature comforts: the food which nurtures, the drink which refreshes, the clothing which warms, the house which shelters, the light which cheers, the breeze which braces—all

these free gifts of nature manifestly pre-arranged and fore-ordained for our efficient existence—we receive them all at Thy loving hand. And while we bless the hand that gives them, we pledge ourselves to be wholly His from whom these gifts come. For the solid earth whereon we move and dwell ; for its abundant fruitage, year in and year out, as though the very alchemy and elixir of immortality have been compounded into its substance, transforming the seemingly lifeless dust into the vitalising food—for this interminable bounty of harvest succeeding harvest, we render our thanks unto Thee. And do Thou grant, Oh ! God of Love, that we receive it all as a dear token of Thy Love, treating it tenderly, using it reverently, prizing it gratefully. We likewise thank Thee for all the leanings and longings that tend to form each body a link in an unending chain. For associates and help-mates, for friends and relations ; aye, for rivals and competitors, for antagonists and opponents—for them all we render thanks unto Thee. For those dear, holy bonds established

between soul and soul for companionship in mind, for comradeship in heart, for fellowship in service, for co-pilgrimage in devotion—for all these we render thanks unto Thee and we sing glory unto Thee, as we receive these precious bounties from Thee. For all the garnered wisdom of generations, for all the insight and foresight which toilers in the vineyard of truth and labourers in the field of service have achieved under Thy guidance—for all that store and treasure of wisdom and virtue we render thanks unto Thee. And while we receive it all as the new year's bounty, once again we take the vow and the pledge that we shall strive to use it as a trust and to increase it as a tribute. We, likewise, receive Thy benediction in the lofty examples which Thou hast set before us for our guidance; the inspiration of those noble souls we esteem as Thy richest boon. All harbingers of Thy light, all messengers of Thy love, all prophets of Thy glory, all witnesses unto Thy grace—we receive them all reverently and we render thanks unto Thee for them all devoutly. Thus, for every case of fellowship,

for every instance of kinship, for every ray of light, for every prompting of love, for every yearning after righteousness we render thanks unto Thee. We receive all these bounties and benedictions direct from Thy loving hand, and gratefully and ardently we praise and glorify Thee for them. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou and Thy name for ever!

#### ASEESH.

Thou Lord of time and eternity! Ever piloted out of the past and ever steered into the future, we launch out in this new craft of Thine own new year, over the expanse of Thy Spirit toward the haven of truth and goodness, purity and love, righteousness and bliss. And as we put out this little vessel, we consign it to Thy care and custody and we surrender ourselves to Thy wisdom and clemency. Do Thou assume full command over this frail bark, preside at the helm and direct at the prow; and do Thou steer it across safe and sure. May we believe, fully trust, wholly confide, in the absolute sufficiency of Thy wisdom and goodness; and

with the devotion due to the Father and the trust due to the Leader and the fidelity due to the Friend may we resolve to discharge life's duties willingly, cheerfully and resolutely! May the New Year be a year of joy and of grace in adoration of Thee! May new visions be disclosed, new faith fostered, new hopes awakened and new aspirations generated! May we be fostered by Thy holy spirit into a new and rich life! May we one and all be trained, adapted, strengthened, perfected unto the pledge and the resolve, "The Lord's will be done, the Lord's love be nourished, the Lord's glory be proclaimed, the Lord's kingdom be established, the Lord be for ever and ever adored and praised!" Thus, once again and afresh, in the life of each one of us, may Thy truth be kindled and brightened, Thy mercy manifested and amplified, Thy love reproduced and rejoiced in, Thy own holy Spirit installed and enshrined and acclaimed as the only rightful Lord of all! May we in the new year go forth entirely under Thy sole guidance and control, with singleness of aim and

wholeheartedness of devotion—go forth to do Thy will, to prove Thy goodness, to establish Thy kingdom! Grant unto us, we beseech Thee, the comforts of peace, the joys of goodness, the delights of worship and the raptures of holiness; that thus, peace within, joy around and bliss everywhere, the whole world be resonant with Thy praise and radiant with Thy glory! May Thy love rule, Thy truth triumph, Thy will prevail, Thy kingdom be established and Thou alone be praised and glorified now and for ever; and thus may this illimitable creation be ordered into one household and this boundless universe reared into one home, hallowed with the Spirit of the Lord and haloed with the glory of the Lord! Thus we tender our humble supplications at Thy footstool. Do Thou vouchsafe unto them the blessing of Thy approval, of Thy response, of Thy fulfilment. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou and Thy name now and for ever more!

*Om ! Thath Sath !*

*Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Harih ! Om !*

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## II

### MARRIAGE SERVICE.\*

(1924)

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HYMN—*Anandavarinidhi* (Telugu)

UDBODHANA.

*Om ! Parabrahmane namah !*

Truly and verily this is a day of *anandam*. With hearts filling and throbbing with raptures of joy, with eyes filling and beaming with tears of joy, with minds filling and brightening with the radiance of joy, with souls filling and praising with the reverence of joy, with bodies filling and quivering with the thrill of joy, we are here to glorify the *Lord of Anandam*. Truly and verily He is here. It is no fancy, it is none of imagination; but in the bare fact, in the simple truth, in the felt knowledge and delight, we

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\* Of Dr. A Chandramohan (son of Rao Sahib Dr. A. Gopalan, Calicut) and Miss K. Venkata Ratnamma (daughter of Mr. K. V. Subbarao, Pithapuram) (1922-24).

see Him here. Perfuming with the aroma of Love, haloed with the glory of Truth, sublime with the sanctity of Grace, He is here, now with us, in us, around us. And unto Him we bow in serene trust, out of profound reverence, as *Prajapathi*, the Lord of all beings; as *Prananadha*, the Spouse of all hearts; as *Pathithapavana*, the sanctifying Grace that makes for righteousness through holy love. We prostrate ourselves before Him and we praise and glorify Him for this blessed occasion.

#### AVAHANA.

Thou art the sole Giver, the bountiful Vouchsafer, of all that we hold dear in life, all that we enjoy in virtue, all that makes us truly Thy children, all that sanctifies us into Thy adorers and servants; and for all and each one of these blessings, we devoutly render thanks unto Thee on this occasion. What we have longed for and prayed for and looked forward to—that blessing—by Thy grace, wholly and entirely through Thy designing, has come to fruition now. Thou alone hast brought it about.

Thou hast eternally purposed it ; Thou hast wisely planned it ; Thou hast graciously blessed it. And we render thanks unto Thee for this. We beseech Thee to grant us the purest of thoughts, the chastest of desires, the sincerest of devotion and the sweetest of love, that we may all realise the solemnity and the sanctity of this occasion. Do Thou, I humbly beseech Thee, do Thou first cleanse and purify this sinful heart. How can it pronounce the benediction of marriage, the purity of which it has so often violated ? (Tears). Do Thou cleanse and purify me, sanctify me with the sacred touch of Thy holiness. I supplicate Thy mercy. Do Thou touch and fill every heart here with the purest affection and the sweetest benediction. May one and all be knit together in the single thought, the sole desire and purpose, of invoking Thy blessings, Thy rich blessings, Thy sanctifying blessings, upon these Thy children ! Above all, do Thou fill these twin-hearts, hitherto apart, hereafter one, with the holy resolve and sacred purpose of being so united in Thine own divine love

that from this moment onward, apparently two in body, they shall be truly one in spirit, united in love, inseparably held as one in the embrace of holy and happy love. We invoke Thy blessings on this occasion. And as we bless Thee we solicit Thy warrant and Thy guidance for the consecration of this holy function with Thy blessing, unto Thy glory, for the life-long, aye, eternal, progress and happiness of these Thy children, and for the ceaseless delight of all those that are interested in them and that wish well of them. This is our humble supplication. Do Thou mercifully vouchsafe Thy blessings. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou !

#### VARANAMU.

[The Minister then stands and garlands and blesses the Bridegroom, saying, ‘The Lord God of all love, of all truth and of all holiness, for ever bless thee, and cherish thee!’ He likewise garlands and blesses the Bride next, saying, ‘The Lord God of all love, of all truth and of all holiness, for ever bless thee and cherish thee!’]

I request Brother and Sister, (Gopalans), to come up here. (They come and stand by the side of the Minister and next to the Bridegroom, their son).

Sister and Brother, I take it that you have brought this your child here with your blessings.

(Parents—‘Yes.’)

I take it that you have prayed over this union and supplicated God’s blessing upon it.

(Parents—‘Yes.’)

In token of the Lord’s blessings and of your benediction, garland the child. (Gives them a garland.)

[The parents garland the Bridegroom.]

[The Minister next calls up to his side Mr. and Mrs. K. V. Subbarao.]

My dear child and my dear son-in-law, I take it that you have brought this darling of yours with your blessings.

(Parents—‘Yes.’)

I take it that you have prayed for this union and have supplicated God's blessings upon it.

(Parents—'Yes'.)

In token of the Lord's blessings and of your benediction, garland the child. (Gives them a garland.)

[The parents then garland the Bride.]

(Minister taking the Bridegroom's hand in his own): My dear Babu, have you of your own freewill, of your own free love, after humbly praying for God's light and love, and after receiving the blessings and benedictions of your parents and elders, come here to receive and accept this dear one as your own lawful, valued, beloved, wedded wife for life and eternity?

(Bridegroom—'Yes'.)

(Minister taking the Bride's hand in his own): My own darling, have you of your own freewill, of your own free love, after praying to God to give you His light and love, and after obtaining the blessings and benedictions of your dear parents, come

here to receive and accept this dear one as your own lawful, valued, beloved and wedded husband for life and eternity ?

(Bride—‘ Yes.’)

Thou art the Eternal Witness, and these assembled friends and relations and well-wishers are only the tokens of Thine own testimony. Do Thou attest and do Thou confirm, with Thine own blessing, this open and free declaration that the parents and the dear ones to be united have now made in Thine own solemn presence. May every word be the truth of the mind and pledge of the heart ; and may Thy blessing ever ratify this holy declaration ! Hallowed, hallowed, hallowed be Thy name !

#### ARADHANA.

How can we praise Thee and glorify Thee ? What art Thou not unto us ? Thou art Truth, thou art Wisdom, Thou art Goodness, Thou art Joy, Thou art Grace, Thou art All-in-all.

O Thou, Eternal Truth, it is Thy truth that is the substance and essence of the whole

creation, of the entire universe of being. It is Thy truth that has shaped the body, evolved the mind, fostered the heart, nurtured the conscience and begotten the spirit within. It is Thy truth that has designed this union and has brought it to a happy issue. We bless Thee, praise Thee and glorify Thee!

Thou art the Eternal Wisdom, all-pervading, all-penetrating, all-comprehending. Into the innermost recesses of the heart Thou sheddest the light of Thy wisdom. Into the farthest reaches of space Thou dartest forth the ray of Thy wisdom. Thy wisdom, which knows, and has, from the very beginning, planned, the whole course, not only of nations and races but of every individual, manifests itself now and here. Who could have conceived that these two souls, one from the far-off west and the other from the distant north, should reach forth heart to heart in proof of Thy wisdom? We bow down before Thee as Supreme Wisdom and render our thanks unto Thee on this solemn occasion.



As Thou art the Truth in essence, as Thou art the Wisdom in design, Thou art Love in purpose, in aim and intention. Thou hast elicited and nurtured that love which this day finds expression and feels satisfaction in this holy union. Thou art Love itself; and it is Thy love alone that thus infuses itself into all hearts and all homes. We bow down before Thee as the Infinite Immensity of Love; and we render our humble and devout obeisance unto Thee.

As Thou fosterest love, Thou broadcastest *anandam*. Out of love we come into being: that is the *anandam* of creation. In love we are secure; that is the *anandam* of protection and preservation. Constantly we tend towards love: that is the *anandam* of growth. For ever we abide in love: that is the *anandam* of everlasting bliss. Thy supreme *anandam*—in ceaseless pulsations of rapture it fills the whole universe with one chant of glorification. Thee as *Anandam* we embrace; and before Thee as *Anandam* we prostrate ourselves in ecstatic adoration.

Thou art the pure, righteous Grace that renders the whole universe perfectly pure, utterly immaculate. In Thee there can never be the faintest touch of sin. Near Thee there can never come the slightest shade of impurity. Thou art the All-pure Being; and it is Thy pure grace that exalts love into holiness and renders every union not only the embrace of the body but the wedlock of the heart and the spousal of the soul, unto which there can be no termination, no dissolution. Thee as the Lord of Righteousness, the all-pure and all-perfect God, we praise and glorify: and unto Thee we surrender ourselves in spirit and in body, now and for ever. Bless this union, we beseech Thee, not for our asking, but wholly and entirely out of Thy love and grace. May we rightly appreciate this blessing and receive it and cherish it as Thy gift! Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou now and for ever!

*Om ! Thath Sath !*

PANIGRAHANAMU.

[The Minister then joins the right hands of the Bridegroom and the Bride and, holding

them in his hands, says, addressing the couple, ‘ As I join your hands, this is only my poor, little, outer act, symbolic of God’s—of the loving, righteous, gracious God’s—deed of unifying your hearts. Do you feel it now, not merely as before these poor, frail human beings, but as in the pure, solemn and blessed presence of the True God, the Supreme Lord, the Eternal Witness, the All-loving Parent, the All-cherishing Protector and the All-sanctifying Redeemer, that you are gifting, each unto the other, your own true heart.]

(Minister to Bridegroom—)

My dear Babu, on this happy and holy occasion, do you then receive this Gift in these words:—(Bridegroom repeats)

(I, Chandramohan, in the presence and with the witness of the dear, loving God, and in the presence and with the benediction of these elders, request and receive and for ever accept you, Sreemathi Ratna Bai, as my dearly beloved better-half and the sole queen of my heart, my honored wife. In health, in sickness, in happiness, in difficulties, in

prosperity, in adversity, always and everywhere, with my whole heart I shall love you and be your partner through life and through eternity. I give you my heart; I request you, give me your heart. And I pray that the Lord God would for ever unite our hearts in love and in holiness.)

Minister: Bless, bless, bless this vow  
O Eternal God!

(Minister to Bride—)

My own Darling, as I unite your hands  
say this : (Bride repeats)

(I, Ratna Bai, in pure love, in holy devotion, with the blessing of God, with the benediction of elders, request, receive and for ever accept you, Sriman Chadramohan, as my own honoured, beloved sovereign of the heart, my cherished partner and guide in life, my ever-valued and respected husband. I vow that in health, in sickness, in joy, in sorrow, in prosperity, in adversity, I shall for ever love you and be devoted to you. I shall be your partner in all the duties of life. I give you my heart;

I request you, give me your heart. And may God, the Unifier of hearts, for ever unite our hearts and bless us through life and through eternity !)

Minister : Blessed be the holy name of the Lord, in whose presence, under whose guidance, for whose ends and unto whose glory, these hearts are thus united now and for ever !

(Minister to Bride and Bridegroom—)

You pray *together*. [They pray (after the Minister): Lord of all truth, Lord of all love, Lord of all joy, Lord of all holiness, as we have vowed in Thy holy presence, keep our hearts united in Thy love and for Thy service and unto Thy glory, now and for ever. Make us Thine own servants and children, that thus we should keep the ideal of the Home pure and happy ! Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name !]

And , my sisters and brothers met here, I beseech you, grant unto these children the richest blessings of your hearts, and guarantee to them your life-long good-wishes. May the Lord of love and grace so weld these hearts that they become one for ever !

[The Bride takes a ring in her hand and says, after the Minister, 'In token of my love and devotion, with the blessing of God, I present you this ring. I place it on your finger, even as I have lodged my heart into your heart. God bless this token!' The Bride puts the ring on the Bridegroom's finger.]

The Bridegroom does similarly, as he says, after the Minister, 'In token of my love and devotion, with the blessing of God, I present this ring unto you and place it on your finger, even as I have reposed my heart in your heart; and as you keep this ring with care, may it for ever be the proof of my devotion unto you! God bless this token!' The Bridegroom puts the ring on the Bride's finger.]

#### SOOTHRADHARANA.

[The Minister takes the *mangalasoothram* in his hand and, closing his eyes, prays (within) over it for a while, and then gives it to the Bridegroom. The Bridegroom says (after the Minister) to the Bride: 'In loving witness and holy pledge of my having received

you into my own bosom and my home, I place this token around your neck, near to your own heart; and as you wear it, may it for ever prove to you and to me that we are one, inseparably one, eternally one, by the grace of God and for the glory of Love! God bless this union!' The Bridegroom ties the *man-galasoothram* around the Bride's neck.]

We pronounce the auspicious word, *man-galam*; and we feel the sanctity of the benediction. We have sought, not to take Thy place, but only to subserve Thy purpose. And as we have thus been honoured with this expression of Thy confidence, of Thy grace, we render wholehearted thanks unto Thee. Thou, the Unifier of all hearts, unto Thee alone it is given thus to draw together seeming strangers into cordial affinity and sacred alliance. This is the richest of Thy blessings; as it is the most wonderful of Thy proofs of love. May we realise all the purity and all the holiness of love; and with that vivid consciousness of Thy own presence and Thy prompting in this, may we for ever render ourselves unto Thee as Thine

own devoted children and servants ! We are certain that Thou dost bless this union ; and may that assurance for ever abide with this happy couple and all their well-wishers !

UPADESAMU.

My Babu and my Darling,

For one who is a minister brought in for the occasion it may be necessary to speak words of advice. For me, however, that is unnecessary. You are my own ; and I shall content myself with pronouncing, not words of formal advice, but cordial benedictions and good-wishes.

As esteemed brother of mine, Babu Hem Chendra Sarkar, writing about this marriage the other day, said that, of the many marriages he had seen, he considered this marriage to be a particularly happy union, because it signified the direct doing of God ; it showed the providence of Grace and Mercy in a special and noteworthy manner.

I have had the privilege and pleasure of being present at, and of invoking God's blessings upon, the unions of those through



whom God has, in His abundant mercy, brought you two into being ; and I have had the supreme personal satisfaction of being regarded by both the families as a dear and cherished person. Therefore, to me this is a day of rare blessing, of special thanks-giving, of particular praise and pleasure. My heart fills with delight, my soul in adoration rejoices, at the holy union of you two, who are so dear to me. What others would offer as advice I would convey as God's blessing. Others will observe that marriage is a very solemn event in one's life. I will say that marriage is the most happy and blessed act of God. You know that your own families are striking proofs of that ; may you prove that truth in your own family ! How they, your parents, have nurtured you and reared you to this stage you know. And as the seed is the future fruit, so also I am hopeful, I prayerfully feel sure, that you, the seeds of their love and loyalty, will be the fruit of their blessedness. God will surely grant it. You only render yourselves to the wise keeping and the gracious guidance of God. Others

will remark that in married life there will be trials and difficulties and that you should be prepared for them. I say there will be, there are sure to be, in every married life, not trials and difficulties, but occasions and opportunities to prove that love is supreme and securely strong and can accept whatever God may be pleased to send any day. God sends nothing but what is proper and beneficial and beautiful. Others will declare that love unifies, merges and makes you one. I shall say, more than love unifying, more than love making the two one, love does this: you, Babu, as a member of the family have no existence except in her whom you have taken as the beloved of your heart; you, Darling, as a member of the family have no existence except through him whom you have declared the beloved of your heart. There is nothing of unifying, none of merging and losing in each other. Hereafter, there is, in the whole race, only one male for you, my Darling, and only one female for you, my Babu. All the rest are only fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, sons and

daughters. The only one to represent the male sex is he unto you. The only one to represent the female sex is she unto you. The rest are merged in the self-manifestation of God as only the expressions of His creative benevolence. And as you live, hand placed in hand, heart united to heart, and soul wedded to soul, in the presence of your God, even as the disciple sees none but the revered *guru*, as the *guru* sees none but the cherished disciple, as the parent sees none but the darling child, as the child sees none but the honoured parent, as the lover sees none but the beloved, as the beloved can see none but the lover, you will realise yourselves only through each other in God. Understand that such realisation is the one supreme test of your love. When a certain student in archery was asked to look at the object aimed at and to state what all he saw, he replied he saw nothing but the object. And similarly, when the wife sees no masculine beauty but in the husband, when the husband beholds feminine charm nowhere but in the wife, as you two thus realise and

reveal unto each other this 'virgin grace', your home becomes a heaven, your family the offspring of God, society the congregation of God's adorers, the whole universe the temple of the All-holy One. Thus, step accompanying step, heart felicitating heart, you will perform the pilgrimage of love through life and through eternity. As you are blessed with opportunities for service, render that service in the name of God. As guests come, let them enter in as the greetings of God's love. And as you are vouchsafed the lovely tokens of your love's fruition, may they shine before you and the world as the visualised glory of God! The gardener is glad that the little plant grows and is budding out. The parent feels similarly glad and thankful with an adoring heart. May you have this blessing! May your home be the pure shrine of God, even as your hearts shall be the high throne of God! May God's blessings be with you now and for ever! Blessed be all those, here or elsewhere, whose good-wishes rest with you! United in love, do you serve in love,

rejoice in love, abide in love, and thus for ever render yourselves unto love—that holy Love which God himself is. God's richest blessings be with you now and for ever !

PRARDHANA.

Do Thou, All-Holy and All-Merciful One, grant, we implore Thee, that Thy gracious benediction may rest on these on this occasion ; and unmindful of, altogether ignoring, my frailties and iniquities, do Thou deign to enter into my speech and impart Thy blessing unto these children even through my faltering tongue. Do Thou, on this happy occasion, also renew in each one of us sacred memories of like experiences. May we—bereaved or blessed—feel once again how holy is that sacred union of hearts with which capacity Thou hast gifted us ! Do Thou, likewise, grant unto those dear little ones who are yet to enter into that supremely solemn state the grace to live in truth and righteousness. May all this fraternity gathered here with songs and supplications constitute one hosanna of joyful praise unto Thee now and for ever !

## ASEESH.

The Lord of all Truth for ever illumine the minds, the Lord of all Love for ever enrich the hearts, the Lord of all Bliss for ever sanctify the souls, and the Lord of all Joy for ever bless the home, of these dear ones! May they be true, pure and loving and, through all their days, firmly devoted to the vows of this day! And may the blessings of God be upon all, now and for ever!

*Om ! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam !*

*Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !*

[After the *mangalam* is sung, the Minister directs the Bridegroom and the Bride to turn to the relations and friends assembled and to make their *pranamams* to all present. He then invites the elderly relations and friends to come up and give their blessings to the wedded couple.]

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### III

SERVICE :

BHAKTHAJEEVANA.

(191 )

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UDBODHANA.

To the great God, to the dear Lord, to the supreme Deity, to the loving Father, to the gracious Saviour, salutations, prostrations, reverential obeisances ! Unto Him that is enthroned on the lofty, holy seat of the universe, unto Him that is enshrined in the loftier, holier temple of the human soul, unto Him be praise and glory, thanks and salutations !

He has vouchsafed unto us the privilege and the pleasure of calling Him our Father and worshipping Him as our God. It is man's high birth-right that he is thus enabled and invited to worship the Supreme Being. To worship is to admire ; to admire is to aspire after ; to aspire after is to seek

to be like; and to seek to be like is to possess the promise, the potentialities, the latent powers, the budding propensities, of the Divine Parent.

We are not merely His creatures. We are verily His off-spring—His truly-begotten children. Not more naturally is the iron drawn to the magnet, not more naturally does the creeper entwine itself around its support, not more naturally do the rivers flow into the great main, not more naturally does the spouse cling to her lord than we do feel drawn unto Him, lean on Him, merge in Him, realise our bliss in Him!

We have our beginning, our course and our goal in Him—emerging out of Him, existing in Him, fulfilling ourselves within Him. Verily we live and grow in Him; verily we work and rejoice in Him. Verily He is the only Reality beneath and behind, about and around, above and ahead of us, eternally encompassing us. This supreme God, this transcendent yet inherent, innate God, is the object of our worship. Nearer than the



limbs and organs, closer than the heart and the life-pulse, sweeter than all physical enjoyment, purer than all physical cleanliness, richer than the richest abundance, He is so dear, so precious, so extremely welcome unto us. Let us bow down before Him.

Not the least doubt need disturb us whether He will listen to our cries. He is ever ready, inviting with outstretched arms, welcoming with a mother's love. He is always open and available to those who wish to be in touch, in immediate contact, in personal communion with Him. Let us, therefore, with calm confidence in His love, with full trust in His goodness, with thorough reliance upon His mercy, with genuine heart-hunger for His companionship, let us bow down before Him.

#### ARADHANA.

Father, how refreshing unto our hearts and how invigorating unto our souls it is thus to embrace Thee, adore Thee, sing Thy praise and rejoice in Thy glory! All our portions and all our duties are ordained by Thee, regulated by Thee, sustained by Thee. The heart would not beat, the pulse would

not throb, the organs would not function, the eyes would be closed, the ears would be sealed, the tongue would be palsied, feelings would be benumbed and thoughts would be stunned but for Thy indwelling presence, the quickening, sustaining stamina and strength which Thy spirit vouchsafeth.

How marvellous, how mysterious, yet how abiding, how beneficent, is Thy Providence! Thou indwellest, occupiest, orderest our whole being. Thou art not a fleeting sight, Thou art not a passing phenomenon, Thou art not a casual experience, Thou art not a superficial expression. Thou art the Inner Spirit of our entire existence. From Thee the tongue has learnt its magic art of speech. From Thee the eye has acquired its wondrous power of sight. From Thee the ear has derived its marvellous capacity to receive and record every whisper. Aye, every faculty is a clear mirror for the impressions, for a faithful reflection of the expressions and manifestations, of Thy life.

We may soar up ever so high, we may dive down ever so deep, we may reach out

ever so far, we may search through ever so minute, we may probe into ever so accurate ; yet beyond the heights of thought, beneath the depths of insight, transcending the reach of poetry, surpassing the range of philosophy, farther than the farthest, nearer, too, than the nearest, Thou art all-encompassing and all-encircling, all-pervading and all-permeating ! Truly and verily, Thou art the great, adorable God.

All that is charming in this world, all that is self-sacrificing in human benevolence, all, all is but the manifestation of Thyself. Matter is but the manifestation of Thy stability. Movement is but the manifestation of Thy operation. Mutual fellowship is but the manifestation of Thy affection. How rich, how cheering, how most charmingly beautiful is this universe ! It is not merely the flower and the rainbow, it is not merely the kiss and the embrace, it is not merely these sweet experiences that reveal Thy beauty. In all the harmony and method, in all the system and co-operation of life, Thy beauty is manifest.

Symmetry is beauty. Harmony is beauty. Co-operation is beauty. Healthy competition is beauty. Fruitful emulation is beauty. In the skill that adapts the surroundings to the conveniences of life and fashions gross comforts into healthful and wholesome exercises for man, Thou charmest our hearts, Thou engagest our interests, Thou monopolisest our affections.

HYMN—*Bhakthajeevana Paramapavana* (Telugu)

As we are the offspring of Thy spirit, Thou art likewise the vital secret of the whole being of Thy devotee. Thou art *Bhakthajeevana*. We know no existence, we can conceive of no life, apart from Thee. Awake or asleep, doing or resting, thinking or working, laughing or wailing, suffering or rejoicing, assimilating or expressing, we live in Thee. As they, the ancient sages, have well observed, the eye seeth not Thee but by Thee; the ear heareth not Thee but by Thee; the tongue speaketh not of Thee but by Thee; the taste tasteth not Thee but by Thee; the hand graspeth not Thee but by Thee; the foot walketh not unto Thee but through

Thee; the world showeth not Thee but is shown of Thee. Thou art the root, the source, the spring, the mysterious essence, of the whole existence of Thy devotee. Verily Thou art *Bhakthajeevana*.

What can we do without rendering our homage unto Thee? What can we think without thinking of Thee? What can we feel without feeling after Thee? Our deeds are but crude reproductions of Thy designs. Our thoughts are but dim reflections of Thy ideas. Our affections are but faint imitations of Thy mercies. Verily Thou art *Bhakthajeevana*. Unto Thy devotee Thou art the food that nourishes, the drink that refreshes, the breeze that regales, the light that cheers, the beauty that charms. His existence depends wholly upon Thee. His hopes have their warrant in Thy mercy. His foresight has its fountain-source in Thy providence. By himself nothing; imbued, indwelt, inspired, by Thee, he becomes wise, virtuous, worthy. Thou art the life of Thy devotee! Verily Thou art *Bhakthajeevana*. Blessed be Thou and Thy name for evermore!

*Om! Harih Om!*

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## IV

SERVICE :

ONENESS WITH AND IN GOD.

(1923)

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UDBODHANA.

Unto Him that surrounds, unto Him that indwells, unto Him that transcends all, unto Him that endures for ever, our humble, grateful, reverent salutations on this thrice-blessed occasion ! Here we are on consecrated ground. Here we breathe revered memories. Here we sit together in the sweet fellowship of the Spirit. Here we feel our nearness, our intimacy, our interwoven unity in God. Here we bow down before Him whose glory can be adored only through reverent prostrations while the heart is both filled with memories, and thrilled with joys, of His own mercy and grace. And here with irresistible longing our spirits turn to

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\* Theistic Camp, Rajahmundry.

Him. Alas! Why say, 'turn to Him'? Rather, we feel that we live and move and have our being in Him. We feel the supreme bliss of being nestled and embraced in His holy spirit. May He intensify this ecstatic, this enrapturing experience, due wholly to His immediate presence with us and in us; that thus, before this sweet embrace relaxes into consecrated service, we may feel once again how dear our God is unto us and how precious we are unto Him! May He mercifully vouchsafe unto us once again this priceless boon, which is and can possibly be in His gift alone!

#### ARADHANA.

Our own dear One! Studied phrase seems a toy and a trifle, and analytic thought an intrusion and an irrelevancy, as we sit here thus wrapped up in Thee. Thou art truly, really with and in each one of us and amidst and through all of us. Mortal powers of perception and expression prove themselves utterly futile when they attempt to depict this experience, and to describe this intimacy, of individual and collective association with

Thee. Oh Dear One ! Thou alone deservest, canst claim to be named the Dear One. The dear is always the near ; and the near grows increasingly dear. The dear and near one becomes more and more absorbing and engaging, till we feel that the dear and near one has become the sweet and sole one of the heart's desire. With him alone is existence possible ; for without him thought is nought and being itself is void. We thus feel, oh, the inexpressible thrill, the unutterable rapture, of Thine own dear presence with us, in us and amidst us here. We thank Thee—forgive the vain attempt at words—we thank Thee with the offering of our hearts and beings, our hearts laid at Thy feet, our beings twined around Thy throne. Oh, the ecstasy of it ! Who can fail to enjoy it, yet who can succeed in describing it ? We thank Thee for this enjoyment ; and we implore Thy forgiveness for our futile attempts to describe it. Pardon our presumption, we beseech Thee—a presumption that is likewise the prerogative of the offspring of Thine own spirit. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name !



What shall we name Thee? Aye, why should we seek to name Thee? The dear one of the heart needs no name. The love and devotion of the heart seek no designation, no description. The lover and the beloved fuse into the oneness of ecstatic enjoyment. And thus, not only face to face but heart in heart and spirit within spirit, we dwell beyond the need, above the possibility, of naming and designating Thee. Thou never needest naming. He that is distant unto the heart—he has got to be named with names. With Thy indwelling and immediate presence in us, how superfluous it were to give Thee a name! We shall not trifle with giving Thee a name. Thou art the eternal, the omni-present All-in-all. Thou art the One: that is Thine only name. And yet, oh God, filled and surcharged as the in-pouring sense of Truth and Wisdom, of Goodness and Love, of Beauty and Holiness, of Peace and Joy, surges into us, we cannot but speak out, cannot but utter forth, in however inadequate a manner, the ecstatic delight of our hearts. And thus we call Thee the True, name Thee the Wise,

designate Thee the Good, proclaim Thee the Loving, acclaim Thee the Sovereign, embrace Thee as the Lord. Not broken up but magnified and glorified, Thou dost remain the same and yet ever new, the lasting and yet ever-emerging, the Ancient One and yet the momentarily remanifested and reincarnated God. Thou dost thus fill not merely the long spans of generations and ages but the little details of every heart-throb and every pulse-beat. We thank Thee and bless Thee and glorify Thee. Hallowed, hallowed, hallowed be Thy name!

Oh, Thou the Sweet One, the Charmer of our hearts! Thou hast meant each one of us to be the dear bride, the chosen spouse, the consecrated consort of Thine own Holy Self. Such is the irresistible, the in-drawing power of Thy charm that the ground under our feet slips, our strength only conspires with Thy purpose and the heart is seized as if by one storm of rapture and we lose ourselves in Thine ever-expanding, all-including embrace of love. Thou hast made us, created us, not for ourselves, not for others, but for Thine

own self. Thou hast said unto each one of us and unto all of us, 'ye are mine'. And the end and fulfilment of our being lies in reacting to that holy offer and invitation and crying forth unto Thy Spirit, 'Lord of our hearts! We are Thine, wholly Thine'. The heart knows no content, the soul feels no happiness, the eye aches with weariness and every sense droops under the oppressiveness of separation from Thee. How a spring opens from within and a halo encircles each one of us without, when with repeated persistence there comes the inexplicable experience of oneness with Thee! The whole universe fills with a new glory and a new radiance and becomes resonant with a new music and a new harmony; and to the single tune of Thy love and beauty, the heart within and the world without dance the eternal dance of Thy praise. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name!

If Thou art everywhere, oh God, are we not of Thee, with Thee and in Thee? We trample the dust under our feet and call it duty. We plug our ears to the melody of

life and call it meditation. We turn away from Thy holy presence and give it the dignified name of service and philanthropy. But the dust turns into gold under our feet, because Thou art there, the unseen Alchemist! The world's melody breaks through the deafness of our ears, because Thou art there, the eternal Singer! All service and all philanthropy is translated into divine illumination in and through every heart and every life, because Thou art there, the gracious Inspirer and Sustainer! Whither can we turn if not toward Thee? Where can we search, if the search does not lead us unto Thee? We may soar into the highest skies, plunge into the lowest deeps, reach forth to the farthest and loneliest ranges and probe into the innermost recesses; and yet it is the same one we come upon. Thou art one only—undivided, indivisible, inseparable, perfectly, absolutely one. Dear God, dear God, may we thus find the purpose and the perfection of our lives in adoring Thee as the one God—the five fingers folded into one grip; the two eyes adjusted into one sight;

the two ears attuned to one note ; the myriad pores of the body covering avenues to one life ; night and day the alternating dispensations of one providence ; the rotating seasons divers phases of one panoramic exhibition of love and beauty ; sages and saints the unbroken and perfectly harmonised witness of one wisdom and goodness, love and grace ; the gospels of the world the beads in the rosary of one praise from pole to pole and from end to end of the universe ; the stars above and the flowers below, the air that pours in and the light that rays forth, all, all congregated at one tabernacle and chanting the one hymn of the ' One only without a second ' ! We bow down before Thee and call Thee ' Our God ' ; even as we know Thou dost call one and all of us ' My children '. Hallowed, hallowed, hallowed be Thy name, now and for ever !

#### PRARDHANA.

Dear God, why hast Thou brought us here together ? Didst Thou stand in need of our praise and worship ? Or didst Thou feel that we needed to be reminded of our debt of

gratitude to Thee? Perish the blasphemy that dares presume it is for Thy purpose Thou hast brought us here together! Yet, oh God, what purpose can we have in coming here, unless it be to fulfil Thy purpose—not the secular purpose of praising Thee and glorifying Thee; but the hallowed purpose of pledging ourselves once again, as Thou hast privileged us to do time and again, to be of Thy household and to worship only at Thy foot-stool? How refreshing, how reinvigorating—aye, what a new life, what a spiritual re-birth—to feel that we are knit into one fraternity even through, and in consequence of, our single, united covenant with Thee, our only God! Why should we feel weak, doubtful, lonely or cheerless, when we are privileged thus to kneel together in Thy Inner Shrine, Thy Holy of Holies, in the most intimate communion with Thee? Where, indeed, is another position or situation to sustain the hope and exalt the destiny of man, like this fellowship in accepting Thee, acclaiming Thee and embracing Thee as our own God in

the intensest faith of the heart and the profoundest devotion of the soul? How rich with the wealth of strength, of genuine and vital strength, becomes the life of each one of us, as we are thus taught to feel that in Thy household dwell these Thy servants and adorers, children of one family, members of one body and issue of one spirit, pulsating with one life, throbbing with one hope, and enjoying the ecstasy of one worship, all embosomed in Thee, emanating from Thee, flowing back into Thee! This is Thy loving and gracious blessing; as this is our distinguishing and sanctifying privilege. We render our whole-hearted thanks unto Thee. Grant that we may carry this sweet experience of our complete oneness, of our welded union of thought and sentiment, of hope and faith, of prayer and endeavour, all rich and holy with Thy benediction—grant that we may carry with us this experience and this joy—into the fields of our daily existence and thus feel for ourselves and show to the world the moving miracles Thy Holy Spirit can work even in humble, erring,

struggling lives like ours. We praise Thee,  
bless Thee and glorify Thee now and for  
ever!

*Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !*

*Om ! Harih Om !*

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## V

### SERVICE \*

with Sermon on

### THE MORAL LAW OF THE SPIRIT.

(1923)

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#### UDBODHANA.

Unto the one and only supreme God, unto Him that is One only without a second, praise, glory and salutations ! He is truly and really the *Ekeswara*, the one undivided, indivisible, eternally single and yet absolute God. Unto Him we render our thanks and our salutations. He is the *Ekeswara* ; and in Him we are all one. By His very indivisible unity of nature and spirit, He renders disunion and difference between us impossible and unthinkable. He is one : and through the eternal unity of His spirit, He gathers and welds the myriad objects in creation into one universe. He is

\* At the annual re-opening of The Young Men's Prayer Union, Cocanada (22-8-24).

the *Ekeswara* ; and His entire *visvam* is also *ekam*. We, the contents and components of His universe, we are parts only in the sense of thought-relation and heart-affection. We are not parts in the sense of divided substance and fractional being. We are undivided, indivisible, even because our Author and Protector ever is *Ekeswara*. He is the one God ; and we are in Him the one Humanity. We live in the one God, and we thus live one life. This unity of substance, this homogeneity of spirit, this 'composite' of love—even this is the basis—the reason and the truth—of our worship of God. We worship Him, because He is the one God—the absolute, perfect All. We worship Him, because we are one with Him—inseparably and eternally related to Him as the moments of His life and the manifestations of His will. We worship Him together, as we are all embraced together in His spirit as the offspring of His holy being. This is heavenly sweetness ; for herein is the sanctity of worship—that it is not a petition from the humble to the high ; it is not a cry from the depressed to the

exalted ; it is not a confession of the erring to the all-judging : it is the response of our hearts, the returning pilgrimage of our souls, even unto Him who has eternally secured us as His own and always and everywhere elicits from us the acknowledgment of our interminable devotion to Him. Blessed be our God, the *Ekeswara*, that He thus puts us into perfect agreement with Himself and with one another, even with the liveliest reassurance that we are all one : that from Him there can be no separation and amongst ourselves there can be no alienation ! One in God, One in humanity ; each feeling towards God as a child after its parent ; each feeling towards every one else even as one member feels with another, we are one in God. And here we are one in the worship of God ; and as we worship Him as the one God, we worship Him as *our* one God—worship Him as *my* God, worship Him as *your* God and, therefore, worship Him as *our* God. We worship Him as that God from whom we have come, in whom we dwell and through whom we feel alike the sacredness of

this duty and the sweetness of this experience. And for this supreme privilege we render our thanks unto Him. Blessed be His name !

#### ARADHANA.

Thou dear One ! It is Thou and Thou alone that hast brought us here together. We need no telling, for we are certain without telling, that it is Thine own attracting and absorbing love that has drawn us here together. We owe it wholly to Thee—for Thou hast of Thy free grace granted unto even us, humble and lowly creatures, this priceless privilege—to be able to call Thee our Father and to approach Thee with the freedom of children. Didst Thou choose to stand on the pedestal of Thine own Majesty, even Thine all-penetrating look could hardly reach down to our insignificance. But Thou hast, in Thy boundless mercy, eternally chosen that we should be near unto Thee, indeed, be indwelt and permeated by Thee through and through. Thus clouds may come—clouds of doubt and distrust ; but they vanish like mists before the glory of the rising sun, and

notwithstanding our ordeals and our sorrows, we feel the assurance of Thy countenance and the strength of Thy covenant. For this we render our grateful and reverent thanks unto Thee.

As we call Thee *Sathyam*, Truth, we feel exalted that Thou hast made us, even us, apparently the floating moats of the moment, to participate in the eternity of Thy truth. If Thou hadst not imparted unto us Thine own self—the sacred self of Thy Truth, the holy self of Thy *Sathyam*, how should this thought awaken ever in us; how should this desire ever throb in us: why should this up-turned eye be spontaneously directed towards Thee? It is all Thy design, it is Thine own providential purpose, that we should apprehend Thee as the Reality, the Truth, the *Sathyam*, that granteth unto us the confidence, the certainty that our life is also unquestionably true. It is not a dream, not a fancy, not an illusion,—this experience that we live. We live the life of truth; we are real in the verity, the veracity of divine reality; we are facts,

realities, because we are participants in Thy *Sathyam* ; and for this we offer Thee our devout thanks. Blessed be Thy name ! Thou wouldst make us not only Thy creatures but truly and really Thine own issue and offspring. Thou art not content that we should merely be brought into being and vouchsafed the certainty of existence ; but Thou preferest to come and dwell in us and be known of us. And in knowing Thee, we come to know ourselves. We are thus Thine own infinite self marvellously, miraculously and momentarily manifested as finite selves, never, never, for the twinkling of an eye, separated from Thee but ever, ever, so close, so intimate, as to see Thee—to know Thee, feel Thee, love Thee, bless Thee, rejoice in Thee. glorify Thee. This is of Thine own wisdom, even as it is of Thine own mercy. Thou art not only the God of Truth ; Thou art likewise the God of Wisdom and Love ; and in this triple bond of Truth, Wisdom and Love, Thou hast for ever related us unto Thee as Thine own children. Coming from Thee as the facts of Thy reality ; knowing

and understanding Thee, by the inspiration of Thine own wisdom, as the reflectors of Thine own light and the reinterpreters of Thine own wisdom, we grow in Thee, aye, grow into Thee. And as we thus return Thy love and, returning it, receive back Thy love and in receiving it, become Thy love, we become, we are, once again, Thy children, Thy adorers and Thy lovers ever one with and in Thee. Blessed be Thy holy name !

Dear One, beloved One, sweet One, charming One, entrancing One, transfiguring One, Thou art the Adored One of our hearts ; and in the serene contemplation of Thy love and Thy beauty, we experience the joy, the rapture, the ecstasy and the bliss of Thy own indwelling presence in us. For this we render our most profound reverence and most grateful thanks unto Thee. And as Thou deignest to accept this tribute, we know we are accepted of Thee and Thy acceptance of it is also our complete assimilation with Thee. Thus blessed, thus sanctified, we praise and glorify Thou. Thou art the tenderly

sympathetic, the profoundly compassionate, the supremely gracious God. Thou adaptest Thy majesty to our humility; Thou conformest Thy wisdom to our simplicity; and thus importing Thyself into our small concerns and endeavours, Thou infusest Thine own spirit, the spirit that expands and exalts our little lives; and thus Thou transformest the plans of man into the designs of God. It is these little endeavours that we are here brought together to contemplate and consecrate on this occasion as solemnly indicative of Thine own divine purpose and presence. Brought together thus to call Thee 'Father', we are given likewise to perceive by whom we have been thus brought together. It is even by Thee. This is not man's planning but of God's ordaining; and for this we render unto Thee our humble prostrations. Thou hast made it sure and certain that, if only we would commit ourselves to Thy care and trust, then even this and similar occasions will be beneficent for our lasting welfare by leading us into the sanctuary of Thy holy spirit. We



bless Thee ; and as we bless Thee, we feel blessed of Thee and in Thee. Hallowed be Thy name !

UPADESAMU.

My dear young friends,

As the invitation was kindly given to me to come and help in this thrice-blessed function of the Young Men's Prayer Union entering on a fresh year of its useful and commendable activities, I felt that I should be tendering my humble homage unto the Holy Spirit if I responded to that invitation. In that spirit I have come here ; and moved by that spirit, I shall address a few hearty words to you, be they but very homely words.

In the physical sciences they recognise one great and truly marvellous principle. That is called the principle of the Conservation of Energy. Energy can never be wasted, can never be diminished, can never be destroyed. It may assume diverse forms, it may be transmuted from one expression to another—at one time as a moving force, at another time as a glowing light and a third time as

some other phenomenon. But eliminated it cannot be. To try to put an end to energy is to combat the very purpose of creation. It needs but brief reflection to perceive that there is a corresponding and, in a real sense, a sublimer principle, namely, the Conservation of Life. Life is, by Heaven's warrant, indestructible. Life can never—on no account—be diminished or destroyed. And as we proceed step by step along the scale as life manifests itself in diverse organisms, through its several expressions of assimilation and integration, separation and multiplication, reproduction and perpetuation, and thus ascend higher and higher, we come to human life, where, as thinkers of different schools have observed, there emerges a principle of great moment, namely, the moral sense. We perceive that the old law of 'conservation' prevails with the most certain and unfailing application to this moral life of man. This moral life of man can never fail—cannot be diminished, cannot be even resisted. It may appear to be retarded, hindered, diverted, forced back. But if there is one

great truth, one solemn lesson, which history emphatically teaches on all hands, it is the lesson that the moral life of man must thrive, that the moral law must eventually prevail. A couplet that I read some time ago says, in confirmation of this moral law being the supreme reality,

“ Stronger than the dark is light ;  
Stronger than the wrong is right”.

This moral law is not something that is external to, something that is located outside, the universe to be, from time to time, promulgated and enjoined. The moral principle evidences the potent moral force, the profound moral purpose, which has been infused into the very constitution of the universe. This world with its order is unthinkable to the physical scientist except on the basis of law. Likewise, this world with its moral values and moral judgments is unthinkable to the student of moral science except on the basis of a moral purpose being embodied into the very fabric of the universe. The uniform trend, the invariable tendency, the irresistible impetus, of the whole universe is

towards moral perfection. Beat down the moral law with oppression, with prejudice, with bigotry, with selfishness; yet it will lift its head, it will assert itself. As Carlyle has observed somewhere, this world is under the Government of One who is the eternal antagonist of injustice; and even though you employ all the talents, all the powers, of statesmanship, aye, all the military prowess of the world, against this moral purpose, woe unto the opposition thus set up: all the greater will be its defeat and destruction! This world, as he elsewhere says, is not a dungeon, a charnel-house; it is God's, it belongs by eternal right to the supreme Ordainer and Exemplar of all morality.

That is the first lesson we have to learn, if life is to be—I shall not say, a success—if life is to be a fact. Take away from life this supreme conviction that the moral law is God's own commandment; life is empty, life is void, life is not only barren but almost all a myth. It makes all the difference in your career, it constitutes all the distinction between reality and fiction, if you do not

learn this lesson on the threshold of life when you are young and continue to practise this lesson all the days of your life. To the same effect runs an Upanishadic text, that there are two paths: there is the path that is good and there is the path that is pleasant; and the life of him that chooses the path that is good is by God Himself blessed with increasing moral strength and spiritual vigour, while the life of him that chooses the path that is pleasant finds only loss, and 'great is the injury thereof': *mahathee vinashtih!* It is this supreme truth that you will have to learn at the very beginning of your active career, namely, that the moral law is beyond all doubt the sovereign will of God.

“ Stronger than the dark is light ;  
Stronger than the wrong is right ”.

By no known process could the dark be enabled to overwhelm the light; by no known power could the wrong be equipped to vanquish the right. On the other hand, along all directions, through all avenues,

from all points of the compass, strength flows in, sympathy streams in, benediction, like a current, surges into the spirit of the man who honours this moral law. That is life—life abounding, life abiding. He is strong because he is on the side of right. He is strong because he is in pursuit of light. Let him once turn his back on the law; and all the rich wisdom of the world is unto him a buried treasure. Let him but once own allegiance to the wrong; and the whole Government of the world pronounces him a rebel and an exile. It is this moral law that commands unswerving allegiance; and when that allegiance is given, it, in its turn, makes him who is loyal to it strong as with ‘the strength of ten’. Obey the moral law, and the world obeys you. Defy the moral law, and the world’s hand is turned against you. You must realise that the moral law is incorporated into the very constitution of the universe. You can no more pluck this moral law out of the foundations of the universe than you can pluck the sun out from the fair face of the firmament. How

blessed is our God manifested, and how happy is our life rendered, that this moral law is thus an integral part, nay, it is the very substance, of our life! It is woven into our very being. Blessed be the name of the God that has so ordained it!

What is it that we want as the real prize of life? The prize of life is further life. Once granted life—real life, we are loath to die. The sole prize of life is more life; and more life is rendered possible only by the steady, uniform operation of the moral law. Our life is rendered thinkable, because we are all governed by the moral law. Let the moral law abate; life also ebbs out. It is the richness of the moral principle that also enriches human life. Our heads bow before those that are the exponents, the living incarnations, of the moral law. With that worship, we grow, we become worshipful. As Maharshi Devendranath Tagore has taught us, God is worshipful; and as we worship Him, we become gods, we become worshipful. And God's worshipfulness consists in this, that He is the supreme manifestation, fulfilment and

guarantee of the moral ideal. As it were, by a hundred processes of uplift, God, as the living Fulfilment of the moral ideal, lifts us upwards towards Him. We become godly, because we adapt ourselves to the moral purposes of God; and what is for the lower animals a necessity, what is for ordinary human beings a task, becomes for us truly and verily a growth and an expansion and, with it, a joy. We grow with the moral endeavour. Food nourishes the body; knowledge feeds the mind; love quickens and enlarges the heart, and righteousness, which is only our realisation of that pure morality as God reveals and ordains it, is the food and nourishment, growth and perfection, of the human spirit.

It is this lesson that we have to learn all through our lives. And the earlier we realise it and the closer we follow it, the better and happier for us. I am here this evening only to remind you, my young friends, for you know it already, that all the education which you propose to receive, all the usefulness which you hope to achieve, all the success



which you rightly aspire to accomplish, all depends exclusively and entirely upon your adherence to this moral conviction, namely, that as it is by light that man's feet shall be led, so it is by right that man's will shall be ruled. Light on the path, right in the heart—these mean God before and God within, God quickening and God sustaining, God guiding and God companionship—God being and becoming in and through each one of us. It has been said that the foundation of all religion, the purpose of all religious discipline, is to reproduce God in man. With the being of God once again becoming God through man, man is becoming God, through a divine perfection of himself; and that is the whole purpose of religion. And as you cultivate the spirit of devotion to God's moral law, you will find that the sum-total of your requirements in life is thereby anticipated and assured to you. In the dark day of doubt, believe in the moral law, and doubt resolves itself, if not into certainty, at least into expectancy and hope. In the trying day of temptation,

believe in the moral law and temptation is transformed from a snare into a suggestion, and what has come to mislead you becomes only a warning unto you that you shall stand by the right and follow the light. Are you opposed by an antagonist? The moral law demands a double duty of you. Question yourself whether your antagonist is in the right or you are in the right. If he is in the right, the moral law demands that you surrender yourself. If he is in the wrong, the moral law demands that you surrender not yourself; and even because you will not surrender yourself, your antagonist is bound to surrender himself, because it is the might of the moral law that overwhelms him. With morality on your side, you are ever secure. With morality justified of you, you are with God; and he who is with God can never be lost. Once Abraham Lincoln was advised by some of his friends who professed to be very pious that he should pray and implore that God might be on his side in the great Civil War between the Northern and Southern States in America. And like

a true son of the Moral Being, Abraham Lincoln said, 'My purpose is not to pray that God might be on my side. My whole endeavour, my entire concern, is that I might be on the side of God—not that God might be won over to my side but that I might be sure and steady on His side'. Conformity to the moral law means being on the side of God; and he who is on the side of God can, in this vast universe, have no *outside*—no foreign realm. Learn this lesson at the start of your life; and you will find that the hardest task becomes the most fruitful occupation, the most trying situation becomes the plea for genuine self-reliance; and you will feel that, like a protecting canopy over your head, like a shield and armour round your body, like a soothing balm under your feet, like an inspiring breath in your bosom, like an illuminating ray in your eye, this moral law will be your guide and your protection, your strength and your happiness. Nothing can go wrong with you, while you are on the side of the right; and he who is on the side of the right is

always on the side of the Eternal Might, because, in the supreme government of God, that alone is might which is right, and unto the right alone is granted the prerogative of the maximum might.

My young friends, on this day, as you enter upon a new year of trustful endeavour and hopeful outlook, ally yourselves with your God, the God of the moral law; and you will be not only safe and secure but strong and happy. This is a day, by happy coincidence, memorable in the history of India. This is the day, according to the Bengali calendar, on which, ninety-six years ago, Rajah Rammohan Roy, with his friends, as his biographer says, resuscitated spiritual worship in this land. And if there is any efficacy in spiritual worship, its sole purpose is to unite God and man and to unite man and man—to unite all mankind into one humanity and unite the whole family of men with its Author and Parent—God. This spiritual worship is, in a true sense, the morality of the Spirit. Spiritual worship is the moral law of the Spirit. Think not that

this spiritual worship is something which you are, for your convenience or for your benefit, taking upon yourself. It is something that has been put into, embedded in, your very being by God Himself. Michael Angelo says, when God gives the spirit in which to pray, then alone we pray. It is said of a certain Islamic devotee that, after twenty years of prayer, he gave up praying, because he said that, though he had prayed for those many years, God had not turned towards him: when there came an answer to him from the voice within, softly whispering, that unless he had had the inspiration from God to pray, he would not have prayed at all. We are prompted to pray because God has turned towards us and is beckoning us towards Himself. God has called us to His worship; and God's worship consists only in the desire to become like God, to be of God, to be transmuted into God. Worship has no other purpose, no other justification. This is the only object of worship, that we become God-like. God Himself has put this spiritual craving into us. Do not fight shy of it. Do

not think of worship as an institution of man's making. Do not think of worship as a set task. Do not think of worship as a profitable exercise. It is the spontaneous response of man to God, because God wants it of him; because God wants man to become truly and really His own child. He it is that has given us this spirit of worship; and as you cultivate this spirit, truly with God before and within you, the moral law will find itself illustrated and incarnated in you; and as you grow under the moral law, you grow into God; and to grow into God is to attain immortality, to grow from age to age even to the end of time. God's blessing be with all of you!

And I shall conclude with an anecdote. It is said that Maharshi Devendranath Tagore was, on a certain occasion, journeying in a boat over a big river, the Padma, in high floods. Boats were afraid to ply, but his boat was some-how driven into the midstream. All cried out that there was danger; and yet the boat went forward, till, from the opposite direction, there was coming another boat from

which a man cried to him, 'Go forward. No fear'. And you, young men, as you set sail over this wide expanse of life, you also need this reassuring greeting, 'Go forward. No fear'. And the greeting that those who have gone before you can give is this: 'Be true to the moral law, and seek to live the moral law'. Therefor give allegiance to God, and establish that allegiance through worship; and then it is guaranteed unto you, 'Go forward. No fear. Your voyage will be successful. Your haven will be reached'. God's blessing be with you all!

#### PRARDHANA AND ASEESH.

Thou art really and truly seated within us, enthroned within us. What is morality but only the flowing forth of Thy life into our lives? We are moral only when we think after Thee. We are moral, only when we reach after Thee. We are moral, only when we reproduce Thee in us, around us, amidst us. Thou hast brought us this gospel in a thousand ways—through a thousand suggestions and in a thousand forms. Thou hast taught us this; and yet we are weak and we

are frail. Thou hast not only to lay down the law, Thou hast not only to show the path, Thou hast not only to guide ; but Thou hast also to strengthen the will and infuse the right spirit. It is thus alone we can render back unto Thee in gratitude and in devotion Thy own gift of life by subserving Thy purpose, *viz.*, that we live, as Thy children would live, the life that Thou art eternally living, and thus be wholly rendered unto Thee as Thine own beloved ones. Bless these, Thine own children. Bless these dear ones—as even a humble, even a prostrate, sinner may implore Thee—bless these, Thy children, in the year that opens out before them. May they walk in Thy path, may they work as under Thine eye, may they grow in Thy blessing, thus becoming in an ever-increasing degree Thine own children ! May Thy truth alone triumph everywhere ! May Thy law of love be the supreme rule of conduct for all ! May Thy name be ever honoured ; Thy righteousness ever shine forth as the light and the joy of our existence ! Be Thou the sovereign Lord of our hearts,



even as Thou art the supreme Monarch of  
the universe! Blessed, blessed, blessed be  
Thy name now and for evermore!

*Om ! Brahma Kirpahi Kevalam !*

*Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !*

*Om ! Harih ! Om !*

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PRAYERS  
AND  
MEDITATIONS.



I  
LIFE THE GIFT OF LOVE.\*  
(1923)

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Hymn—*Jeevanavallabha thumi deenasarana !*

...                      ...                      ...                      ...                      ...

*Jai ! Jai ! Kripamai ! Mahima thumari (Bengali)*

Thou God of Love ! Thou the Author of the whole universe ! Thou the Father of every being ! Thou the Giver, the free and gracious Giver of every life, all beings, all forms and types of creation ! Truly and literally, this life is Thy *prasad*, Thy gift, Thy free gift, Thy gift of bounteous love, Thy gift of pure mercy, Thy gift of holy grace. Oh, how can we understand its value ? Thou art the Giver ; and Thou givest from no consideration, but out of pure love. Thou givest, not as a test, not as a recompense, not as a reward, but purely as a gift,

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\*Thanks-offering, after *ushahkeerthan*, on Sixty-first Birth-day (18-10-23).

a free gift. Then, how can I know its value? I did not ask for it. I was nowhere to seek it. I was nothing; and yet Thou hast made me something. Thou hast evoked a being out of a blank. Thou alone canst know, and to Thee alone is given to value, the worth of life. Yet, the true aim, as well as the real worth, of life is to know itself. This is the wonder of Thy gift that the gift discloses itself, the gift makes itself known and felt, because it is Thy gift, because Thou abidest therein. Like a fine flower, so charming in colour, so attracting in form, so enchanting in fragrance, it comes—it does not know how, and yet it comes—and when it comes, it knows itself as surrounded by life-giving light and air, and reveals itself as the gladdening and cheering gift of God. This flower of life, which Thou hast given as a free gift of Thy grace; this blossom blooms and becomes the occasion of pleasure, of happiness, of bliss as Thy *prasad*, Thy gift, beyond all values. With what can it be compared that we should know its value? Where can be found

another object by the side of which we can estimate its value? As Thy gift it fills all space; as Thy gift it occupies all times; as Thy gift it is placed in the centre; and as Thy gift it spreads out far and wide. Of this life, which is Thy pure gift, we cannot even pretend to know the value till we live it, till we actually experience it, till we personally enjoy it. And what is a gift, except that it brings free enjoyment? What has a true gift to bestow except itself as a sweet, transporting experience? And thus, oh Thou dear God, Thou grantest us the gift: Thou impartest Thyself in the gift: and as we perceive Thee in the gift, we hold the gift dear till we become the gift. Thus, Thy *prasad*—this life, this *jeeram*—has sprung entirely out of Love, out of Mercy, out of Grace. There must be operating nothing but love, nothing but mercy, nothing but grace—all kindness, all benevolence, all holiness, to produce this rare, this wonderful, this invaluable, this holy gift. The Giver alone can know the value of the gift; the gift alone can disclose

the worth of the Giver. If there were no love, there would be no life. If there existed no love, who would know Thee as the God of Love? Thus the gift is in Thy hands, and yet the gift is in Thy heart also. And it is a pure gift of love, always in the heart of the Giver, and yet always in the presence of the Giver as the very proof and witness of His gift-giving power and grace. This is really a wonder and a marvel—the Giver giving and yet ever abiding in the gift; the Giver giving and yet ever enjoying the gift; the Giver giving without stint and yet never missing an iota of the gift! How close, how intimate, how enchanting is this relation of the gift unto the Giver! O! Would that we should only thankfully, peacefully, trustfully, reverently know the gift, feel the gift, love the gift, render thanks unto the Giver of the gift! How priceless a treasure in itself! Who can state its value, till it shows its value unto the trustful? And this gift, single yet unbroken—through what periods of time has it been continuing; whither does it tend; what is the sum of its

powers and possibilities, hidden underneath its patent limitations? Oh dear, dear, dear God! It Thou didst not mean, as Thou didst surely mean, to make the gift a witness of Thine own love, we should call it a puzzle, a perplexity. But Thy love is at the heart of the gift, on the surface of the gift, around and above the gift, all through the gift. And thus we say, '*Jai! Jai! Kripamai!*'

It is for this *kripa*, this tender, embracing affection, which Love, of its own proper nature, shows as its form that we are to be ever grateful unto Thee. If we should perceive its value during a single moment, though unable to comprehend its immensity through endless ages, we could not say whether Thou wert Love abundant or Mystery profound. But ah, Thy love itself is the mystery of mysteries, Thou art the Mysterious Being, not unknown but ever knowable; not unseen but always and everywhere to be seen! Thou art the Mystery here and everywhere, now and hereafter, within and without, above and below, at the centre and along the circuit. But, oh Thou, the



Life of all, unto Thee where is the here and the there; where the now and the then; where the in and the out; where the up and the down; where the centre and the circumference? Full everywhere and yet focussed at every point, Thou art the mysterious God of Love and Life—Life springing out of Love, and Love embracing and perfecting Life; Life knowing itself in Love, and Love discovering itself through Life. Once again we say, '*Kripamai!*' This life is Thy gift. And oh, this humble, this almost invisible particle of life—what is it; what is its worth and value; what care and attention does it deserve in the boundless immensity of Thy creation? And yet, oh God, in the vastness, in the immensity, of all, Thou carest for, Thou attendest upon, this life, even as though it were the sole object of Thy care and attention. That is Thy mysterious love. If we wish to soar off, Thou keepest ahead of us. If we seek to retreat, Thou forestallest our steps. Everywhere it is Thy presence makes life real, true, vivid and enduring. And this tiny little particle

—even to it Thou givest the pulse, the living pulse, of the profound faith that it is not a nothing but a real, vital something in the shoreless main of Thy love. Thou dost project it through measureless distances, endless times, that it might know how it counts for something in Thy love. Thou dost always guard and protect it from the distressing, debasing sense of its own insignificance. And Thou movest it to recognise its high value for Thy sake, for its being exalted in the embrace of Thy love. Thou dost constantly inspire it to feel that it is good, it is worthy, it is noble, it is holy, it is heavenly, it is godly.

And on a day like this, a day insignificant if counted among the secular engagements of life, and yet a day most meaningful if counted in the sanctified concerns of love and holiness, what shall I do, what shall these dear ones do? We feel and we own Love is the Giver of Life and Life is the gift of Love. And as the Giver dwells in the gift and thus purifies it and sweetens it, enriches it and sanctifies it, the gift becomes holy as the

Giver stands in His glory before the adoring gift. We prostrate ourselves before Thee. I cast myself on Thy clemency and say, 'Jeevanavallabha ! Jeevanavallabha ! Jeevanavallabha !' Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou, for ever and ever, for all the tokens, for all the expressions, for all the pledges, of Thy love ! How I bear about me every mark of that Mercy the impress of which alone can give any worth or value to what I am and to what I am accustomed to call mine ! Where would be the 'Me', let alone the " Mine," but for these marks and tokens of Thy love ? Oh, may those marks abide and bear witness, with the eternal stars, each a shining centre of love and grace, unto Thy glory and as the tokens of Thine own supreme love ! We bow down before Thee. We seek to be nothing but Thine. We desire to possess nought but Thee. We strive for nought but to be made Thine. Do Thou perfect, do Thou resume, what Thou hast projected, that thus the going out and the returning in might be one complete circle of Thy love ! Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thou and Thy name for ever !

*Om ! That Sath !*

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Father of all, Thou art our Father. And even because Thou art our Father, we could thus come together. I beseech Thee, grant Thy blessing unto these, Thy children—these that are so dear unto me even as they are dear unto Thee. It is Thy goodness and Thy kindness that dwells in their hearts and shows itself in this tender, loving form. To thank them is but to proclaim Thy goodness and Thy kindness. And to realise that it is only Thy goodness and Thy kindness is to bless them as the channels through which flows Thy grace. They are endeared for the sake of Thy goodness; and Thy goodness is endearing as flowing through them. They are here and now, as they have been on several other occasions, as sure and certain tokens and expressions of Thy kindness evermore manifest in and through them. My heart thanks Thee for them; and for Thy sake, my soul prays for them. Do Thou bless them, I presume to pray. And yet, faith and hope bring it home to me that even as being the media of such kindness shown to the humblest and most insignificant of the

myriad objects in Thy creation—even for that—they are already blessed. Even as Thy blessing has already been imparted to them and is reflected through them, may that blessing come out in richer fulness! May that blessing be the ‘double blessing’ of revealing Thee unto men and pointing men unto Thee! And thus, in the heart-union of Thy children, may Thy purpose be fulfilled and Thy love be revealed; and thus all, all perceive Thy love and sing Thy glory, ‘*Jaya Deva! Jaya Deva! Jaya Deva!* Glory, glory, glory unto the Supreme God now and for ever!’

*Om! Brahma Kripahi Kevalam!*

*Om! Santhih! Santhih! Santhih!*

*Om! Harih Om!*

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## II

### NAMAKARANAM.\*

(1924)

Thou the Searcher of all hearts, Thou the watchful Witness in every heart, Thou the august Judge in every heart, Thou the supreme Monarch of every heart ! Thou art the Witness to, Thou art the Judge of, all the pain and anguish this heart has been feeling these several days—even the pain and anguish that, while the world is led or misled into the notion of worth and virtue, there is the ceaseless, the unquenchable, hell-fire, in the heart, of separation from Thee and the aching feeling, the tormenting sense, of the loneliness born of that separation ! Social gatherings, friendly congratulations, brotherly rejoicings †—how they have been but so many deceptive narcotics, while

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\*Of Mr. K. Hanumantarao's third son as Venkata Ratnam. (26-7-24).

†On the conferment of Knighthood (3-6-24).

in the depths of my being there has been nought but trouble and torture! Thou knowest it all; Thou art its sole Witness and Judge. It would seem as though Thou hast ordered this sore trial, this excruciating agony, even that the sinner might thus be resumed close to the bosom of the Saviour, the prodigal son restored into the mansions of the forgiving Father. And now and here, hast Thou again created one more occasion for that solemn call of Grace Divine, in putting it into the hearts of these parents that they should distinguish their new-born darling by placing upon it the mark of a name that, unto the kind world, has seemed a fountain but, unto the knowing spirit, has proved a mirage? For, as Thou art the ordainer of all destinies, art Thou not also the originator of all designations? But for the working of Thy holy spirit, how else should the thought have occurred, and commended itself, to these dear ones? Thus Thou probest, indeed, but only to purify; Thou searchest but only to elicit the good. Even in the seeming trifle of a particular name being affixed as a label

to a fresh and spotless soul, Thou verily desirest that the anguished heart should receive a new hope. Verily, no spirit, however abandoned of itself, is given up by Thee. Then, with a lowly, reverent heart I receive this message of Thine that the tears of penitence shall be transfigured into the pearls of regeneration, and all that is impure and tainted drained out even by Thy saving grace—aye, re-smelt and re-shaped into loveliness itself.

This name for the darling—how poor as an initial asset of life in this pilgrimage, onward and upward, even unto Thy holy throne! Yet, do Thou bless the darling and the name, as a convincing proof of the virtue of that spiritual kinship which endears even one of my frailties to the good parents. And all the other bearers of the name in our own household of faith—may they also, through Thy grace, grow into that spiritual kinship, even if these sinful lips and this tainted heart should duly go out of account. Likewise, in the presence of this holy congregation, may it be permitted to me to supplicate



Thee to put it into the hearts of the sisters and brethren, gratified in the bestowal of this name, that they feel as one tribe and one family and, out of the wealth of their own brotherliness, enrich the affinity that makes us members one of another! And may all these loving ones feel that they owe to him whose name is thus tenderly regarded, not reverence, but the pure, seraphic prayer of intercession before Thy altar! Bless the home; bless the congregation; bless all who, not here in body, nevertheless are here in spirit, in loving fellowship. Vouchsafe that thus the whole human family may be steadily and increasingly drawn into one holy confraternity of adorers, rejoicing fellow-members of one God-inspired and God-guided race. Not with the anxiety of heavy responsibility, not with the trembling sense of awe, but as gratefully welcoming receivers of a hallowed gift straight from Thy hands, we praise Thee and bless Thy name on this sweet and sacred occasion. Hallowed, hallowed, hallowed be Thy sovereignty over our hearts and homes!

*Om ! Santhih ! Santhih ! Santhih !*

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### III

#### SINNING WITHOUT SORROWING.

(191 )

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How injuriously rank conceals vice! What is condemned as foul blasphemy in the common soldier is condoned as a choleric word in the captain. The fashionable sin, the moneyed sin, the sin sanctioned by rank and position, the sin sanctified by custom and so-called religion—that does not leave a harrowing feeling in our minds. We seem to set off one good against one bad quality. A highly learned man may be a frail member of a family or a society. But we are disposed to condone it, as if we balanced wisdom and error. As Bunyan has said, sin going in silver slippers is the fashion, sin going in rags is the outrage, with us all. We excuse the man through considerations of these external and adventitious aids; nay, more, he prides himself that he is not detected. I

commit a sin ; and I cleverly conceal it. And what follows ? Setting aside all penitent confession of it, I call that man a fool who has allowed himself to be exposed ; and I congratulate myself on my success. Sin cloaked in rank or prestige or fashion and palming itself off as a virtue—that is the worst type of evil. Man or woman bartering away eternal interest for passing lucre, and taking pride over the transitory triumph—that is the saddest, the most pitiable position one can think of. Why is it, then, that so many of us both delude ourselves and deceive the world in this manner ? We cleverly escape detection, because we are either too secluded, or, though notorious, yet not exposed for being fortified by rank and position. We slur over our evil ways ; and there comes to be no painful pang—no unquiet mind, no troubled heart, no outraged conscience, no agonised soul. As soon as a sin is committed, man and woman, high and humble, old and young, enclose it with the thick fence of fashion ; and behind this fence they commit more sins undetected,

because of the fence so secure around them. Take two persons, one looking upon sin as a slight deflection, and the other as a grievous fault. We note a striking difference, not in the measure of the fault, but in the susceptibility or imperviousness to shame and sorrow. When we see a sinner who writhes in shame and sorrow, we discern in him a touch of goodness, a spark of virtue. But the man who is hardened in sin and meets public opinion with a brazen face is, we find, not merely sinning but seasoned in sin. Caius Marius, the fallen Dictator, goes away to Africa and, seated at the base of a pyramid, exclaims, "Departed worth seated with departed worth!" But to the man who falls and yet goes about as if there is no fall, his former greatness is only the surviving semblance, but not the true expression, of internal merit. So long as there is a conflict, a pang, an anguish in the heart, there is yet a relic of goodness and a chance of redemption. What Tennyson calls "want-begotten rest" is wholly deplorable. To sin and not to sor-

row, to stumble and not to struggle to rise, to be stricken with ailment and not to strive after health, to be blinded and not to feel after light—that is evidence of the man reconciled to his degradation, and the future is all too hopeless for him. The higher the sin—the more honoured the sin—the more popular the sin—the more superstitiously sanctioned the sin, the readier the man to take things lightly, aye, gloatingly. The outside world also will be only too prone, not merely to excuse, but even to applaud, the moral lapse. But, in truth, what does it matter how the world views it, if the person is not able to acquit himself to himself? There goes forth a young man, one gay night, to take an hour's pleasure; but in that dark hour, he makes an innocent creature, as he thinks, a sharer of his enjoyment and, as it ultimately proves, a victim of his iniquity. The world condemns the victim but condones the tyrant. Why? Because it is the fashion. It is the sanctioned practice. Custom has put a cloak over the young man's iniquity. Wide-spread superstition has removed it out

of the catalogue of sins. To be the favoured of the high-placed is good fortune itself, according to the world's shallow notion. In what way, for what purpose, are you favoured? That is the crucial question, the acid test. There are men who shudder at the thought, not of their iniquity, but of their detection and downfall. There may be a few choice spirits who, in spite of error, are alive to the true greatness of flawless virtue. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is yet true that the finer the nature, the keener the struggle, and the blunter the nature, the feebler the struggle, for reform and redemption. Sin is of man's frailty; repentance is of God's grace. To sin and not to sorrow is to ignore, if not to defy, the Redeeming Deity.

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## IV

### TOLERATION.

(191 )

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Faith in the progress of truth ; faith in the ultimate triumph of truth ; faith in the susceptibility of human nature to Divine impulses—such a faith begets true toleration. Toleration, with reference to its sources or moving considerations, is of three kinds: (1) the toleration of powerlessness ; (2) the toleration of indifference ; and (3) the toleration of faith. This last-named type believes, and rests upon the belief, that, however pointed or marked the differences, they are no more than passing phases or temporary accretions, and that at the core, at the vital centre, there is a homogeneity, a harmony, of nature which manifests itself in kindred hopes and aspirations ; and this belief alone begets true toleration. It springs, not from inability, not from non-interference, but from dispassionate equanimity, be the other man your

adherent or your antagonist. Such toleration becomes a supreme duty even for the reason that God Himself adopts this attitude towards us. His is always the serene, tolerant method of evolution, from within, of the capacities of our common human nature, not the rude, intolerant method of employing a super-incumbent will from without. Thus and thus alone is sweet harmony ensured also between soul and soul. Sadi, the Persian poet-moralist, tells us a story that Abraham, the Hebrew Patriarch, received a wandering stranger who had sought refuge and shelter during a stormy night. As they sat to dinner, Abraham asked his guest what religion he professed ; to which the stranger gave the reply, that he did not accept the Jewish faith but was a fire-worshipper. Thereupon, the Patriarch—the “friend of God”—instantly turned the stranger out of doors into cold and gloom. But the story goes on that God appeared that night to Abraham in a dream and said, in heavenly accents, ‘Abraham! Abraham! I have tolerated the man for ninety years. Couldst



thou not tolerate him for a single night ? ”  
Hence, toleration is a duty, a divine duty—  
the duty to see brother-man from “ the view-  
point of eternity,” to appraise a co-child  
of God as his Author and Saviour would  
appraise him.

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## V

### FAMILY THANKSGIVING.

(1920)

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Praise and glory, thanks and salutations from the bottom of our grateful hearts, from the depths of our reverent souls, unto the Supreme Author, Protector and Saviour of all! From the tender whispers of adoring spirits to the cosmic harmonies of suns and stars, the song celestial in praise of the Lord is resonant all over creation. The tuneful bird in the air, the sportful lamb in the field, the frolicsome fish in the stream, the humming throng in the mart, the sweet amenities of the home, the rapt meditations of the cloister—all combine, in one universal hallelujah, to own and to acclaim the illimitable goodness of their All-gracious Sovereign. And we that are met in this family sanctuary, as members of one household—we, too, will join in this ‘canticle of Creation’, to praise and glorify Him; and

we will hail and honor Him, the sole Monarch of the universe, as the presiding Deity of our home. In His infinite mercy, He has privileged us to seek and to approach Him with the freedom and the familiarity of the child towards the parent. And with a pre-science and a providence that transcend all conditions and limitations, He foresees and provides all our requirements, from the balmy breezes without to the ambrosial affections within. And in return for this measureless mercy what can we, what is given us to, render unto Him, except the adoring homage of our hearts—hearts that in the very act of adoration feel enriched beyond human calculations? Thus He, who by right eternal holds our hearts in fee, momentarily works this miracle of grace in them—the miracle that hearts rendered are hearts regained, hearts given up are hearts gifted back. Blessed be He, the Lord of our hearts, now and for ever ! .

Thou, the Almighty, the All-wise, the All-merciful, the All-holy God ! Our hearts thrill and throb with gratitude and reverence

for Thee, as they feel and realise the tender affection, the loving kindness, with which Thou hast ever cherished us. Days, weeks—indeed, months, have gone by since we last came here together to worship Thee; and during all that time with what intent solicitude Thou hast kept watch and ward over each one of us! Thou hast not only supplied the wants of our persons and the needs of our family but ever cheered us with Thy presence and blessed us with Thy grace. With Thine own parental hand Thou hast brought unto each one of us every necessary of life—from the food that sustains the body to the wisdom that strengthens the spirit; and for all these free gifts of Thy bounty we render our thanks unto Thee. For the ennobling circle of fellowship and friendship in which Thou hast placed us—for the inspiring heritage of the past, for the invigorating comradeship of the present, for the heartening hopes of the future—for these prerogatives of human existence, we render our thanks unto Thee. Taking us under direct, immediate care; feeling in us

intimate, individual interest, Thou dost personally tend and foster us, teach and guide us, purify and strengthen us, sanctify and bless us. Thus Thou showest Thyself our Parent and Friend, Preceptor and Guide, Saviour and Lord. We thank Thee and we bless Thee for all these mercies.

And on this day we would particularly remember and render thanks for the fresh sign vouchsafed to our faith that, should we but turn to Thee and call on Thee in the dark day of doubt, in the anxious hour of misgivings, Thou art ever-available, ever-accessible unto us: Thou art ever prompt to turn Thy ear of sympathy and to open Thy heart of clemency to our humble supplications—ever ready to take our trusting into Thy loving hand and to lead us out of gloom into light, out of fear into joy, out of frailty into firmness. Thou hast once again brought it home to us that truth has the warrant of Thy wisdom and justice the potency of Thy righteousness. For these reassuring evidences of Thy ever-holy purposes we render our whole-hearted thanks unto Thee. And

as the doubts have cleared and the misgivings have vanished, we feel the prick of penitence that now and then our faith felt weak and our trust felt troubled; and we implore Thy pardon, we supplicate Thy forgiveness. Likewise, we renew our covenant with Thee, our ever-faithful Friend and our ever-bountiful Protector, that, firm in this refreshed, reinforced faith, we will always confess and adore Thee as our sole Lord and seek and subserve Thy will as the supreme end of our lives. Do Thou deign to accept our humble homage and to receive us into Thy grace. Grant, we beseech Thee, that, throughout our lives, our hearts remain Thy sanctuary, our hearth kindle Thy *harathi*, our home resound with Thy praise. Blessed, blessed, blessed be Thy name now and for ever!

*Om ! Santhith ! Harih Om !*

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APPRECIATIONS  
AND  
REMINISCENCES.





# I

## TUKARAM AND HIS ABHANGS.

(1886)

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### (1)—THE LIFE-SKETCH.

The lives of a nation's great men are the exponents of its history. The characteristics of a nation's heroes, the class to which they belong, the lives which they lead and the estimation in which they are held by all, are an index to, and an epitome of, the distinguishing marks, the particular habits and temperaments, of the people. A nation with martial instincts cherishes the memory of its warriors and generals; a people with an industrial and commercial bent of mind, honor and value their master-mechanists and successful business-men. The ruling passion of the Indian mind is religion; and the worthies of India have always been men of deep spiritual experience. Themselves a nation

hood-winked by caste and custom and tongue-tied by authority, the Indians have yet always been to the forefront of other people in honoring the religious, in exalting the truly devout, in the nation's eye. Caste and custom have been set at nought, the petty distinctions of position and community, have been overlooked, and the most hearty welcome has always been accorded to a man for the sterling worth of his precept and example. It must always speak volumes in favour of the unerring religious instincts of our countrymen that *pariahs* and shoe-makers have, whenever they deserved it, been exalted to the highest position to which a man can attain, and have, at times, been even deified.

Tukaram of Pandharpur, the greatest Saint and a famous Poet of Western India, was born of *Sudra* parents, at the village of Dehu, sixteen miles to the north-west of Poona, in the year 1608. His ancestors were always men of piety, devout followers of Vittoba or Vittal, a form of Vishnu. The family had a temple at Dehu, 'where

Vittoba and his wife, Rukmini, were being worshipped for some generations before the birth of the subject of this brief appreciation. Tukaram was naturally brought up in the religion of his ancestors, and was early recognised as an earnest-minded, moral and religious youth. Nothing is known about his education; but it may safely be inferred from his *abhangs* (short hymns), which are the most popular in the whole range of Mahrathi literature, that he was well-read in the sacred lore of his country. He was, however, early in life put to the ancestral occupation, which was dealing in grains. His father, Bulhoji, intended to retire from the world. The loss of his wife and the natural instincts of his own soul led Tukaram's elder brother to the adoption of an ascetic life. Our hero was, therefore, very early apprenticed to business; and the onerous responsibility of managing the business and supporting the family, devolved upon his tender shoulders at the age of thirteen. For several years, during which worldliness and spirituality were, like

the legendary good and evil angels, contending for the sole sway over his soul, Tukaram assiduously applied himself to the business entrusted to his care. But the tricks of the unprincipled, the disguised snares and traps of the scheming and the dishonest, always made an easy victim of this child of honesty and veracity. There was, however, another direction wherein he was to excel and eclipse all his competitors. The man who seemed more or less a failure in the transactions of this world was destined to be a capital dealer in the priceless commodities of a hereafter. The unsuccessful tradesman had the genuine merits of a saint and hero in him.

The ways of Providence are mysterious ; the designs of the All-wise are inscrutable. He sends grace into a stall ; He calls up a hero from the ranks. The means He adopts are simple beyond measure ; the ends He achieves are unsurpassable. Touched by His grace, tumults pave the path to peace, evils become heralds to good. Examples are not wanting where scenes of grief or death were

spurs to the religious instincts of a man. History is not wanting in cases where the sudden sight of a tragic calamity was the starting-point in a memorable career. The death of his friend, Alexis, by one stroke of heaven's lightning, tolled the knell of Luther's worldly career. At once he relinquished his studies and became a monk. The successive sight of an invalid, a corpse and a *yogi* impressed in indelible characters, on Gautama's reflective mind, the frailty and instability of the flesh and the strength and permanency of the spirit. In one panoramic view were the glaring contrasts between worldliness and religion, falsehood and truth, death and life, transiency and immortality, brought before the youthful prince. His whole idea of the universe around him and the world within him passed through a complete circle of revolution. He leaves an insipid, meaningless world behind him and goes in quest of that heavenly beatitude which alone can satisfy the thirst and the hunger of a restless soul. Tukaram also passed through a similar ordeal; his path to

glory lay through the same thorny tract. He was cradled into religion by grief and care; he learnt in acute suffering what he taught in inspiring song. His father, mother, dear wife and tender son fast followed each other to a lamented grave. To make the cup of his sorrow brimful, famine set in; the business failed; and mishaps visited him in battalions. The remaining wife—for Tukaram was twice married—greeted him only with abuse and reproach; and in this vast wild of life he did not find a single redeeming feature or one soothing companion. The world lay before him in its charmless monotony; this direful succession of unnumbered woes completely disconcerted his mind; and he had nothing left but the native resources of his own self to fall back upon. The soul at last rose triumphant; and the intended aim of an All-guiding Providence was accomplished. We do not hold that the All-merciful delights to harass His children, or that the All-just takes special care of a few chosen people. But we do say that the charms and rainbow

exaltations of a fascinating world must cease to be looked upon as the end and aim of our being ; that before the soul rests satisfied with the hope and faith of an unseen future, the innate transiency of the present world must be thoroughly impressed on the mind ; that

“ The path of sorrow, and that path alone,  
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown ;”

and that, though the chances of improvement are equally bestowed upon all, yet it is only the watchful virgins, ready with their vestal lights, that accompany the bridegroom. Tukaram's soul embraced the feet of God with thrice-sacred hallelujahs ; and reverence for the All-merciful and practical love for His children became the sole concerns of His life. Famine might have left him half-starved ; but the affection for his fellow-creatures remained unabated. During this critical period of his life, Tukaram was, one day, presented with a bundle of sugar-canes, of which all but one were given away to the eager applicants in the streets. The single sugar-cane



which is taken home, is broken in twain on his own back by his enraged wife ; who is, in return, graciously complimented upon her loving act towards thus sharing the gift with her lord. “ You must be extremely fond of me,” said the sage to the irate wife, “ that you are unwilling to eat yourself even that single sugar-cane.” The man that was so kind and amiable was certainly ill-fitted for the hard struggles of a worldly life. He gave up his profession ; and after a while he was compelled to leave alone his turbulent wife also. Thus, single and solitary, with none but his Vittoba to bear him company, Tukaram started upon his religious career. For a time his religious influence was confined to a small circle of admirers. He would learn by heart the *abhangs* of former sages, and chant them to his heart’s satisfaction. To bathe early morning, to worship Vittoba in his temple, to retire for several hours to the neighbouring hill of Bhandara, there to spend his time in prayer and contemplation, and to return to the temple in the evening, formed the routine of

the smooth, happy, sequestered day of the sage at this period of his life. As yet Tukaram had no fixed ideas in religion, although he had a firm grasp of the spirit and essence of all true faith—reverence for God and affection for His creatures. But a disciple of Chaitanya—the sage of Nuddea—initiated him into the Vaishnava religion and, in the words of Tukaram, pointed out to him that “very Ocean of mercy” who Himself was to ferry His devotee across the wild-whirling eddies and mad-foaming billows of the vast expense called life. The spark in him was thus fanned into the full blaze of enthusiastic religion; and Tukaram went out into the wide world to restore the lost and the wandering to the sweet embrace of a loving Father. Declining to depend upon the hymns of others, his heart poured forth her native melody, and gave expression to those soul-animating strains, five thousand, it is said, in all, which are so very popular as Tukaram’s *abhangs*. His inspiring hymns, his edifying discourses (*kathas*, as they are called), his deep piety and his exemplary life moved the

public mind with talismanic effect ; and the pious contagion of a pure and noble soul spread far and wide. Tukaram's name began to be honoréd and loved. His humble birth and poor position were forgotten. The petty tradesman and low-born Sudra came to be the object of great admiration. But lasting glory is never achieved so easily. An abiding fame is never won at so little a cost. Tukaram had not yet served the full term of his probation ; his last battle was still to be fought and won.

A great mind has, in all ages, been a tried mind. The seer has ever been the greatest sufferer. The world has always persecuted and tormented its prophets ; and suffering has all along been the badge of their tribe. A noble mind is a very sensitive organism. A keen conscience and refined emotions are two of the most striking characteristics of the worthies of the world. Dead to self, they are ever alive to the woes and sufferings of the world. Tears rush into their eyes, their hearts sink within them, at the sight of what the world looks at and passes by. They are the suffer-

ers' brothers ; they take a willing share of the world's woes. They also stand forth, on the other hand, the most uncompromising upholders of truth. Indifference or time-serving is unknown to them. Truth is more precious than life itself to them. To dance to the whims and fancies of the world, to gain cheap reputation by the suppression of the right, is humiliation and horror to them. The world may rage, friends and foes may scheme against his life ; a saint of God will not swerve from his conviction ; he cannot forego his love for truth. And the result must be, trials and tribulations, sufferings and miseries. Around true worth there gathers much abasement. For every article of pure gold, there are a hundred Brummagem ones. And in order that the latter may sell, the former must be cleared out of the way. The world has been well compared to a flock of sheep. The masses must always be led by some one ; and the bell-weather is generally some envious creature. Empty barrels make much noise ; hollow jealousy is the loudest in profession ; and the uninitiated

and the unregenerate are carried away more by the sound than the substance. Backed by the blind enthusiasm of a strong though thoughtless mob, baseness generally triumphs over worth; and fools gain the upper hand of sages. The victory may be short-lived; the halls of joy may soon be converted into dens of misery; but the suffering to the good and the great is none the less keen. Tukaram had, as a matter of course, his full draught of the cup. To mention a few of his trials and sufferings. Among his more attentive hearers and faithful adherents was a man whose garden bordered on the temple of Tukaram's favourite God, Vittoba. The prickly shrubs that formed the fence of the garden outgrew their proper limits, and were an inconvenient barrier in the way to Vittoba's temple. On the eve of a grand festival, Tukaram thought it advisable to clear the path; and counting upon the friendship and anticipating the permission of the owner of the garden, removed the overgrown thorns. This the pretended friend snatched as an excuse to

vent a long-simmering envy, and with the self-same thorns thrashed Tukaram almost out of breath. The patience and equanimity with which the sage bore the cruel treatment spoke with seraphic voice of his supreme virtue and easily achieved what the most eloquent advocacy of truth and goodness had failed to do.

“ I have no punishment to fear ;  
     But, ah ! that smile from Thee  
 Imparts a pang far more severe  
     Than woe itself would be ”.

The tyrant falls by his own violence. The thought that he had so brutally treated a sage and saint drove daggers into the man's heart ; and he soonafter became one of the most ardent worshippers of Tukaram. In the same circle of his audience was a woman who evidently attended his preachings more to feast her eyes than to chasten her heart. Some go to church to pray ; but some others go there to make love. And to the latter class belonged the woman. With her person fair and handsome, her heart was black and

ugly. Finding a suitable occasion, she whispers something into Tukaram's ears which almost drives him mad. With all the affection of a wounded fawn, his soul makes its flight to the Throne of God and sighs forth its grief in a touching *abhang*, in which he solicits his Vittoba to protect him from the evil machinations of a tempting woman. Simultaneously he chants another *abhang*, which he addresses to the wicked whisperer. "Excepting my wife, every woman is a Rukmini (Vittoba's wife) unto me. You are my mother. Utter not such poisonous words. If you want a husband, you can lawfully offer your hand to some one among so many men; but defile not your tongue by such vicious words." Among the villages over which Tukaram's preaching tours extended was a place called Lohagava. There was a brazier, Sivaji Kansari by name, who had an intense love and admiration for the saint. Every time Tukaram went there, the brazier would close shop and wait upon, and spend his whole time with, the *bhagath*. But this was not to the liking of the good woman,

the brazier's wife. She resolved to wreak vengeance upon the destroyer of her fair prospects. In one of his tours he is induced to have a warm bath; the sage sits down to bathe; and the enraged woman pours down water scalding-hot upon the meek devotee. But Tukaram's mind remains unruffled. A true saint, according to the ideal of Hindu teaching, is one who minds not the difference between pleasure and pain. To regard as a God-send all but what has been wilfully courted is the test of true religion. Tukaram utters no words but those of prayer and supplication to the All-merciful for relief from the suffering. Here, the old victory of patience over envy and ill-will is once more achieved. It is the vengeful Jove and not the suffering Prometheus that eventually falls, it is Judas and not Jesus that is worsted, in the unholy struggle. The almost super-human calmness with which Tukaram had borne her maltreatment effected a radical change in the woman's nature; and the husband and the wife thenceforth joined the small band of Tukaram's most faithful



followers. Thus did virtue and innocence come out triumphant everywhere. True worth and excellence may for a time be thrown into the shade; but in this world of solid realities, which has an Almighty, Eternal Enemy of injustice and untruth for its Creator and Ruler, nothing but truth and righteousness carries the day finally. The noble teachings and the exemplary life of Tukaram spread his name far and wide. Prince and peasant vied with each other in rendering homage to this true servant of God. Sivaji, the illustrious founder of the Mahratta Empire, expressed a desire to see him. With all the pomp and circumstance of royalty, he sent his men to the sage to solicit the favour of a visit. But what cares a Diogenes for the honors an Alexander can bestow? His small tub gives the Philosopher a peace and a contentment which a boundless empire could not afford to the Emathian Conqueror. Tukaram excused himself on the plea that a visit to Sivaji would lead to no good. In return, he favoured the young chief with seven *abhangs*, the substance of which may

be stated as follows:—"Those who seek glory, resort to the palace; but does peace dwell there? As for myself, my soul is proof against the charms of rich clothes and costly ornaments. No real good will arise from your actually seeing me. Do what I tell you. Do not avoid anything which it is but right that you should do; and do not commit what will lead you to sin. Lend not your ear to the back-biter and the evil-hearted; but always find out the real supporters of your power. To tell you always to champion the cause of the helpless is, of course, superfluous. It will delight me much to hear that you act according to my advice." Sivaji was a great admirer of saintly Hindus. He was a disciple of Ramdass, in whose *ghairu*-colored clothes the particular hue of the Mahratta national banner has its origin. Moved by the awe-inspiring greatness of the sage, young Sivaji personally paid a visit to Tukaram and proffered him a trayful of jewels. Of course, the saint declined the rich present, with the characteristic remark that he who has Hari

in his grasp sees no difference between pebbles in the street and those colored stones called gems. In return he gave the youthful ruler some of the priceless truths which he possessed in abundance. Sivaji went back deeply impressed with the saint's holiness.

Tukaram's end is veiled in mystery. For several years did he, with his fourteen chosen disciples, preach the name of God with marvellous results. But the biographer is silent as to the place where he died. In fact, it is believed by his followers that he was translated to heaven bodily. An ignorant world always delights to honor its heroes with miraculous births and deaths. Speaking of Jesus' birth and death, Professor Max Muller says, "To your mind these two miracles must be the least perplexing. You know that, whenever the founder of a religion has been raised to a superhuman or divine rank, the human mind rebels against an ordinary birth and ordinary death. It is extremely curious to observe how on this point human ingenuity tries to outbid

divine wisdom." And he significantly asks, "Is there anything more wonderful than the ordinary birth of a child?" and "how would a carnal resurrection and ascension benefit us?"\* But it would appear from a manuscript in the temple at Dehu, supposed to be a relic of Tukaram's, that in 1650 the saint went on pilgrimage; and his biographer, Mahipati, states that Tukaram, at this period, spent his time mainly in meditation and prayer in solitary places and seemed to have been entirely absorbed in contemplation of the Supreme Spirit. Probably the sage retired to some lonely, secluded mountain, there to spend his latter days entirely in the worship of the great God whose glory he had proclaimed to the world with such remarkable zeal. Whether it was a pilgrimage or a retirement, no one saw the saint after this; and the probability is that soon after he closed his career here below. At Dehu, his birth-place, there is a tomb dedicated to his holy name, where a grand annual festival is celebrated and a fair is held in the last month of the Hindu year.

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\* Biographical Essays, p. 139.

Tukaram's *abhangs* are to this day as popular as ever. With great enthusiasm they are chanted by large assemblies, and they certainly contain numberless passages that will bear comparison with the religious lore of any age or country. In our next, the reader will be treated to a few choice *abhangs* of the great man.

Tukaram was a *Vaishnava* by religion. He believed in a formless Prime Cause of the universe; but also held the possibility of an incarnation. However, he discovered the essence of all religion—true and pure love. His reverence for God was boundless: and his affection for his fellow-creatures, equally great. Pure in heart and righteous in soul, guileless and forgiving in deed as in devotion, in the native eloquence of his words as in the child-like simplicity of his actions, he was, in every sense of the words, a saint and a hero, eminently fit to enjoin a moral or enrich a tale. If the lives of great men aught avail in smoothing our path and lightening our task in life's onward and upward march, let us reverently take a hint

from the history of one who lived for the glory of his God and the good of his race, and the one aim of whose life was, in his own words, never to forget God and ever to sing His praise with zest. The son of a *Sudra* and the unsuccessful petty tradesman, honored by Brahmins and glorified by crowned heads, is surely as beneficent an object of study and meditation as the marvellous life which commenced in a log-cabin and closed in the White House.

(2)—THE ABHANGS.

Man has been defined as an incarnate word. What he says, how he says it, and the extent to which he verifies it in his own life, are a sure index to the man. Though out of all proportion to the original and picked only at random, the following few *abhangs* amply illustrate the truth. Even on a cursory reading, one may discern in them a depth and vigour of thought and a force and directness of expression which may well serve as precious treasure to this morally impoverished age—the age of insincere jargon and deceptive sentiment.

What is true of Tukaram holds good of all great men. They speak from the heart and at once move a kindred cord in the hearer's heart. Words proceed from their lips with native force and purity. They speak with authority ; truth is to them a matter of vivid, happy experience. They say what they feel ; they do what they say. Unlike the generality of mankind, they have a deep faith in the triumph of truth. To them a religion of mere professions is a mockery ; it is, in Tukaram's words, " as hollow as the delusions of a dream." Theirs is a creed of solid realities—of honest conviction and unflinching action. Their lives lend power and beauty to their utterances ; their glowing earnestness distinguishes them from the stolid crowd, and gives them a kind of universal nature. Our hollow brag dies with us ; and let the world rejoice at it. But the words of a great man are meant for all ages. They bear the stamp of immortality on them ; and, wherever repeated—be it in any language and any country—they make the hearer's heart beat all the livelier for inexpressible joy.

To enter an almost boundless Eden and to come out with the rarest and most charming of flowers and fruits is well-nigh an impossibility. The reader will, therefore, consider the following to be only pretty fair, but by no means the best, specimens of the soul-enchancing strains of Tukaram. The first two *abhangs* express the saint's idea of God.

“ O Narayana, Purifier of the guilty,  
 Protector of the poor,  
 May Thy form remain (enshrined)  
 in my mind, and may my tongue  
 constantly utter Thy name !  
 Thou Lord of the universe,  
 and Defender of Thy servants,  
 Life of our lives,  
 Tuka says, God of Gods.”

“ Thou art kinder than a mother,  
 more refreshing than the moon,  
 thinner than water—  
 all a wave of joy.  
 To what shall I compare Thee,  
 besides Thyself, O God ?



I wane myself around Thee  
 as an offering to Thy name ;  
 Thou didst create the nectar—  
 but Thou art sweeter than it.  
 Thou art the Creator of the five elements  
 and the holder of universal authority.  
 Without speaking anything,  
 I quietly lay my head on Thy feet ;  
 Says Tuka—forgive me my faults,  
 O God of Pandhari.”

This ennobling idea of God and this keen consciousness of a close relationship with Him as the “Mother,” and “Creator” of all, naturally lead Tukaram to a strict enquiry into his own defects and needs ; and in the following five *abhangs* he sorely bewails his sinful nature and solicits the saving grace of God.

“ I am fallen and sinful ;  
 to Thee I come for protection ;  
 Save me from shame, O Panduranga.  
 Thy power of saving the faithful,  
 is unlimited ;

I am greatly fallen, O Panduranga.

Tuka says—with my whole heart

I have come to Thee for protection ;  
Let my sin be destroyed, O Panduranga."

" Without Thee, O Lord,

I am like a fawn lost in the wilderness ;  
And its heart broken with grief.

Do not try me to the last."

" With all my heart I surrender [God ;

myself to Thee—body, voice and mind, O

Nought else is admitted into my mind ;

my desire is fixed on Thee.

There is a heavy load on me ;

who else but Thee, O God, will remove it ?

I am Thy servant—Thou art my master,

I have followed Thee from afar.

Says Tuka—I sit at Thy door

with an execution for debt ;

Grant me a meeting

to settle the accounts."

" People call me Thy servant—

therefore protect me.

Vindicate Thy name of Protector

of the helpless, Redeemer of the fallen.

If my sins were searched,  
 they would be numberless ;  
 my own heart bears witness to this.  
 I know not how to serve Thee ;  
 God, Thou knowest what is within.  
 Says Tuka—Thou art an ocean of mercy,  
 free me from the toils  
 of the world by Thy grace.”

“ The child communicates to the mother  
 its hunger and its thirst ;  
 But what does it know of the  
 (mother's) trouble in supplying those wants?  
 Likewise dost Thou protect one,  
 Thyself taking up all the burden.  
 Think not of my good and bad qualities ;  
 I am entirely guilty. () Narayana.  
 Without devotion and without help,  
 I am a heap of sins.  
 Why dost Thou now enquire them ?  
 The moment my heart followed Thy feet,  
 it gained decided advantage.”

Oppressed by this deep sense of sin, the  
 devotee turns towards the human soul divine  
 —“ the seat of sin and salvation, the ethereal

spark that in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." To purify the soul, to note and to obey the manifestations of the Divine Spirit in his spirit, to attain God by singing His praise and by doing good to all—these are the questions which next engage Tukaram's interest.

"When Jupiter enters Leo,  
barbers and priests enrich themselves.

The mind is tainted by millions of sins,  
but the man externally shaves  
his head and chin.

What is shaved is removed ;  
but tell me, what is altered in the man ?  
In his vices there is no change,  
which would be a sign of the removal of sin.  
Without faith—says Tuka—all is vain."

"If doubt harbours in the mind—  
it is called sin ;  
In the mind itself are both  
merit and fault.

As is the seed, so is the fruit—  
precious or rotten.

Tuka says—to purify the mind,  
is the chief good."

“ Where pity, patience and peace exist,  
there is the seat of God ;

He runs to that place  
and fixes His abode there.

Who flees, with the eager pace of  
beggars towards an alms-house,  
to the place where God's praise is sung,  
He, says Tuka, worships God  
by chanting His name,  
and obtains Him.”

“ Sing the song with earnestness,  
making pure the heart ;.

If you would attain God,  
here is an easy path.

Bend your heart low,  
and touch the feet of saints ;  
Of others do not hear the good or bad qualities.  
nor think of them.

Tuka says—be it much or little,  
do good to others.”

“ Saintliness is not found in the bazaar—  
in wandering from door to door—  
or amidst woods and forests.

It cannot be had for heaps of gold,  
nor does it exist in heaven or hell.

Says Tuka—it is within our own selves—  
not to be found anywhere else  
in the world.”

“In vain a man wanders and undertakes  
pilgrimages, when God is within him.  
As the source of sugar is in the sugarcane,  
so God, the root of salvation, is within us.  
Butter is in milk, only one must know  
the process of churning it out.”

At last he obtains “God, the root of salvation,” and is freed from sin. Upon him there dawns a new faith, than which “there is now no greater gem.” He expresses his satisfaction and peace in this happy state.

“There is no happiness  
other than peace.

Therefore, preserve peace  
and you will cross over to yonder shore.”

“For this did I endure toil,  
that my last day be sweet.

Now have I securely obtained rest ;  
the motion of my desires has ceased.

The outlay I have made rejoices me.

By it have I attained the name of the Holy.

Tuka says—Salvation is the bride  
 I have wedded ;  
 Now there shall be festivities for a few days.”

“ All evil passions are in this human life ;  
 But by invocations I have made myself pure.  
 Now this universe has become holy ;  
 I have washed away the sense of differences.  
 In the City of Brahma I continually dwell ;  
 the face of pollution is not to be seen.  
 Tuka says—we shall ever dwell in solitude ;  
 And enjoy in Brahma the beatitude of  
 Brahma.”

“ Who cares for this restless world ?  
 My friends are the people of Hari.  
 My time passes in musing upon God ;  
 pleasure is accumulating for me.  
 I have no trouble even in dreams ;  
 night and day pass away smoothly.  
 Tuka says—the fruition of God  
 is a feast of excellent flavour.”

Purified from sin and “ seated in *Vai-*  
*kuntha*,” the saint abhors sin :

“ Better be blind than sin with the eye ;  
 I would prefer deafness to hearing the  
 back-biter,  
 And dumbness to impure speech ; ”

and he speaks very feelingly of the insignificance of the world and of the worth and the permanence of religion :

“ To think upon God no particular  
 time is needed ;

It should go on at all times ;

Blessed is the mouth

which always utters ‘ Narayana ’.

Learn to place your affections on the Highest ;

All else that is spread out is vain.

Thus does Tuka always advise all men ”.

“ Life without Hari in the world

is a corpse decked out in jewels ;

Polite externals without Him

are the outward softness of a cobra.

Unlucky, indeed, is the man

without *bhakti* (devotion).

This perishable body is sure to dissolve.

Why do you not utter His name with your  
 voice ?



That name has saved myriads of people,  
And has seated them in *Vaikuntha*.

Nothing in the universe is so real  
as that Name;

And why do you not bear it in mind ?

Tuka says—That Name is

above the reach of the Vedas,

But Gopala has given it to us gratis.”

“O God, grant this boon

that I may never forget Thee,

And that I may sing Thy praise with zest.

This is all the wealth I ask.

I desire not distinction, nor riches.

I do not want emancipation from existence.

I pray that I may live to praise Thee

and enjoy the company of the good.”

The saint's idea of dangers and misfortunes is completely changed. He has obtained the means of triumphantly meeting them; he has learnt the art of distilling out the soul of goodness from things evil.

“ When dangers overtake them,

the servants of Hari should remember Him ;

By the contemplation of His Name,  
 dangers fly away in diverse directions.  
 Says Tuka—Hari permits nothing  
 to lie heavy on the heart.”

“ Well, well, Vittoba, Thou hast done well ;  
 To see that there is forgiveness inside,  
 Thou hast caused the body to be chastised  
 with prickly shrubs.  
 Subjecting me to the disgrace of endless  
 abuse, Thou hast rescued me,  
 Says Tuka, from the clutches of anger.”\*

We will conclude with two *abhangs* illustrating the saint's conception of man's social duties. They should be read along with his reproach to a wicked female, and his priceless advice—“this one Yoga,” as he himself calls it—to young Sivaji, both to be found in the article on Tukaram in the last issue.

“ Making a fortune by honest trade,  
 spend it with prudence.

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\* Said on the occasion when the saint was scourged by his pretended friend, with the very thorny shrubs which he had pruned in clearing the path to Vittoba's temple.

His will be a blissful end,  
 he alone will enjoy an excellent banquet,  
 Who does good to others  
 and knows not how to hurt them;  
 To whom others' wives are ever  
 as sisters and mothers;  
 Who cherishes all creatures, and even  
 in a desert gives water to the thirsty;  
 Who is calm and never blames any  
 and honours the dignity of his elders.  
 Tuka says, this is the fruit of *asramas*,  
 the climax of asceticism."

" He, whose kinsmen are  
 the worried and the troubled,  
 Should be recognised as a Saint;  
 most surely God dwells in him.  
 He that embraces the unprotected  
 to his heart,  
 And shows his servants the kindness  
 due to his own sons—  
 Says Tuka—past all expression,  
 he is an image of God."

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## II

PUNDIT ISWARA CHANDRA VIDYASAGAR.\*

(1905)

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The age we live in might very appropriately be termed an epoch-making age, in more ways than one, in the history of our country. The social and religious progress of Modern India is but the life-story of a hierarchy of sages and prophets born to ameliorate the man of the work-a-day world, uplifting the prostrate and appreciating the ignored. The heroes of Modern India are thus quite distinct in type from those of old. Since the time of the great Buddha up till the days of Rajah Rammohan Roy, we have had not many but extremely few philanthropists who combined with cosmopolitan sympathies also a versatile genius and a sturdy will. Modern India dates from the rise of that morning-star of reformation, Rajah Rammohan Roy, who for the first

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\* Brief notes of the Presidential Speech at the Anniversary meeting held by the Hindu Social Reform Association, Rajahmundry.

time in the age, so to speak, preached the old yet ever new gospel of a full life as opposed to, as distinguished from, a life of angular development. He it was who first showed, alike in theory and in practice, how life, in addition to being contemplative, could also be amplified and intensified—in short, be lived to completeness. Unlike the Rajah's life, Vidyasagar's was, it is true, not marked by a 'catholic wholeness' of capacities and interests; nevertheless, it lacked not the essence of that spirit. The mantle of the Rajah, at any rate in the ministry of social reform, surely fell on Vidyasagar. He was truly an Elisha coming after the Elijah of this age. A man of lofty intellect and a noble, sympathetic heart, he devoted the richest of powers to the noblest of social services. He was not merely a great man but a hero and a sage with an extraordinary degree of selfless and practical generosity—at once the glory of India and the 'cynosure' of other climes. A true prophet like Vidyasagar cannot but ultimately be honoured even in his own land. The nearness

cannot for ever dwarf the greatness. It is but proper that our minds, on an occasion like the present, should be hallowed with grateful and reverent recollections of eminent worthies in our own land and also in other lands whose anniversaries come up so close to one another. This, for our behoof, is the anniversary season also of Kursondas Mulji and William Wilberforce, of Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson. Kursondas Mulji was a man of light in an age of superstition, a strong man in the midst of sneaks and always a champion of whatsoever was true, pure and righteous. Vidya-sagar had the highest esteem for man as man and never heeded authority robed only in the externality of form. He was a man who could and did cry 'shame' on every species of hypocrisy and to whom truth was eternal because God was its guarantee. He was a star of the first magnitude whose light shall ever continue to be shed on the onward path of his countrymen towards the regeneration of decrepit India. May his life be a load-star unto our eyes and a

loadstone unto our hearts ; for unto every one it is given, beyond doubt, to be good, though not to be great ! The good in the great ones of the world, like the illustrious Vidya-sagar, is alike the incentive to, and the warrant for, the ceaseless endeavours of man after ever-advancing progress ; as their lives are the noblest revelation of the one increasing purpose which runs through the ages.

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### III

PUNDIT ISWARA CHANDRA VIDYASAGAR.

(1908)

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There are three general considerations that move men to come together and combine—firstly, common human ideals ; next, common human interests ; lastly, common human hatreds. Of these the third consideration can only bring about a pact which is doomed to be short-lived, as it is subject to internal disintegration. The second promotes a combination capable of some measure of continuity ; but it cannot permanently withstand extraneous opposition. The first alone can establish an enduring bond of union, which stands four-square against all adverse forces ; it is sustained by an innate strength derived from God Himself. As a concrete instance of the cementing power of ideals, the common admiration for a great man operates as a unifying force of marvellous efficacy. To love and seek to emulate a



great man—to endeavour to reproduce his noble virtues in our own lives, and yet to remain dissociated from one another is an impossibility; it is a flat contradiction. We must, we cannot but, feel a spiritual affinity towards all those who strive, like us, to do what great men have achieved before us. Gathered together, accordingly, in this kinship of hero-worship, we will now turn to contemplate awhile the life and character of one of the greatest of the great men of the last century, which period has been richly productive of great men in our country. We are here to celebrate the anniversary of Pundit Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar—a worthy in whom met not only a number of versatile powers, such as scholarly learning, reforming vigour and philanthropic bounty; but also a noble ‘constellation’ of inspiring virtues.

Mahadev Govind Ranade, himself a personality of surpassing worth, has enumerated the main characteristics of a great man as four in number: sincerity of spirit, earnestness of conviction, originality of talent and

attractiveness of personality. All these characteristics are strikingly illustrated in the great Vidyasagar, cast as he surely was in the genuine heroic mould.

It has been observed that, if you wanted to make a country great and good, you should give it worthy mothers. In Bhagavathi Devi Vidyasagar had a mother whose benign influence powerfully operated in calling out all the native goodness and greatness in him. The sincerity of spirit, for which he was noted, was stimulated by that good mother. On one occasion, as Vidyasagar was seated on the *pial* with his father and some of their friends, the mother entered, with tearful eyes, and pointing to a little child-widow, said to her gifted son, "You are a great pundit ; but is there no protection, no relief, in the sastras for such unfortunate creatures?" The appeal flew into the very heart of the son, who felt it as a divine call. Thenceforth this appeal became the one absorbing interest of his life ; to it he devoted his whole energy. His sincerity of purpose brushed aside all

personal considerations ; it made nothing of the difficulties of the task. Against it all worldly interests weighed as dust in the balance. The appeal from his revered mother—that appeal on behalf of thousands of dumb-stricken victims of custom, ever urged him on, to relieve the loneliness and to mitigate the miseries of mother India's hapless daughters. He wrote his memorable pamphlet on 'Hindu widow-marriage'—its necessity and its propriety, as recognised by the sastras ; which, he conclusively established, did not prohibit, but distinctly sanctioned, this reform. However, in this country as in many another land, it unfortunately happens that the scripture of scriptures, the supreme social authority, is ultimately the all-dominating custom. But Vidyasagar's pamphlet was a gauntlet of challenge to the erudite pundit-world ; and that world could not disprove Vidyasagar's contention. Only custom was unassailable. Nevertheless, what the sastras approve and what humanity demands Vidyasagar needs must do, in scorn of consequence. It has been said that in a

truly great man's life the moment for action immediately follows the moment of conviction ; it is a convincing proof of Vidyasagar's greatness that where pundits parlied with learned pronouncements and generals held back in helpless disappointment, he proceeded, with unflinching steadfastness, to set the seal of action upon the principles he had advocated. Again, sincerity of purpose, at times, manifests itself in doing just the opposite of what the world at large unthinkingly follows. Accordingly, Vidyasagar exerted himself in inducing persons of all ranks and denominations to send their daughters to school. In these latter days, everybody will readily concede, at least in theory, that female education is a very desirable thing. But at that time the generality of even the educated section viewed the idea of girls being sent to school with grave doubt, if not with disconcerted alarm. But Vidyasagar got the injunction of Manu, ' Educate your daughters like your sons', painted in bold characters on the carriage which took the girls from their

houses to the school and back. Thus, as the joint fruit of the patriotism of Vidyasagar and the philanthropy of Bethune, there came into being the first school of its kind in modern India. And it was a really great achievement for him, when he could induce that renowned Pundit, Taranath Tarkavachaspati, to send his daughter to school. How affectionate a place this movement of female education occupied in Vidyasagar's memory is betokened by the touching incident that, when he happened after a good many years to visit the institution, he stood before the statue of Bethune with tearful eyes, oblivious of all that was happening around him. Again, sincerity of purpose proves itself in self-denial. When there occurred a vacancy in the Calcutta Sanskrit College on a monthly salary of Rs. 90, Vidyasagar would not tolerate the proposal that he should himself be appointed to the post, while his own place on Rs. 50 a month should be given to another. He proceeds post-haste, on foot, to a village over fifty miles distant from Calcutta to induce the Tarkavachaspati mentioned

above to apply for the higher post, himself writes out the application and gets it signed by his friend and brings it back to Calcutta and sees his friend appointed to the place. He would not consult self-interest, he would not seek personal advancement, but with the finest spirit of fairness, he appraises the capacities required for the office and prefers his friend to himself as the more competent of the two. Likewise, as he was one day looking into his accounts, several years after the resignation of the Government appointment, he discovered a discrepancy of a fairly large amount. Having been keeping a correct account of his income, he could find no satisfactory explanation for this excess. He concluded that it must be Government money which he had somehow forgotten to pay up. So, straightway he sends it over to Government. But the Accountant-General would not receive it ; since he could discover no debit in the public accounts against which he could credit this amount. But Vidyasagar insisted on it, saying, "Your books may or may not accommodate this

amount ; but my conscience cannot accommodate it. The money is not mine ; it must be yours, and you must receive it." And received it had to be.

Closely related to this trait in his character, there was his earnestness of conviction. On the eve of the first Hindu widow-marriage in Bengal, he called on Ram Prasad Roy, the son of Rajah Rammohan Roy, and a person of rich talents and high position as the first Indian to be elevated to a High Court Bench. Vidyasagar invited him to the wedding that evening. But Ram Prasad Roy was anxious to avoid the novel engagement. He observed that he had the utmost sympathy with the Pundit, who was a great ornament to Indian society ; and he was satisfied that it was a good cause ; but he doubted if his presence was quite necessary and enquired whether he could not be excused. At once, pointing to the portrait of the illustrious Rajah which was hanging on one of the walls, Vidyasagar exclaimed, " Pull that down ; you are no longer fit to keep that portrait in your room."

Again, Vidyasagar's own son desired to marry a widow and made known his wish to the father. But Vidyasagar's brother, Pundit Sambhu Chandra Vidyaratna, who disliked the prospect of this revolting heterodoxy attacking his own household, tried hard to dissuade the young man by saying, 'The sastras may or may not sanction this innovation; but beware of going against custom and incurring the displeasure of your relatives and friends. Forsaken by kith and kin you will stand pitiably alone.' Vidyasagar, on the other hand, warmly approved of the proposal and cordially encouraged his son in his worthy intentions. He declared that his son could do him no greater honour than that of illustrating in his own life those high principles of justice and freedom for which he had toiled and fought to the utmost of his powers and resources. His son had voluntarily accepted the position; and that gave Vidyasagar inexpressible joy. It was, again, in the same spirit of dauntless courage of conviction that he summarily resigned his high position as



an Inspector of Schools, avowing that he should not be enjoined to do what his deliberate judgment would not suffer him to do. No doubt, for his uncompromising attitude Vidyasagar had to run heavy risks in certain crises; which has, indeed, been the lot of almost all great men. It was the case with Abraham Lincoln; it was, again, the case with Rajah Rammohan Roy. Repeated threats of assault necessitated a personal body-guard at times; but the spirit of the hero no threats could really subdue.

Next, as to originality and resourcefulness, it is not easy to tell in how many ways it manifested itself in Vidyasagar. When a little boy, he had to travel once with his father from his native village to Calcutta. Then he happened to see a mile-stone and asked his father what it meant. The father told him that it was a mile-stone, one of many placed at regular intervals to mark the distance, which was indicated by the figures on the stones. At once his precocious mind applied itself to the figures, and he knew them all before the journey to Calcutta clos-

ed. It is said that some days afterwards, when his father was engaged on some work with English figures, the boy was peeping at it with intelligent interest. The father told him to go away, as he could understand nothing of the work from his ignorance of English figures. The little Iswara Chandra replies, "Do I not know English figures; have I not learnt them from the mile-stones?" Again, Vidyasagar could pass the Judge-Pundit examination at the surprisingly early age of seventeen—an examination success in which qualified a person to take his seat by the side of a Judge and to advise him in his work. He easily attained to an uncommonly high proficiency in Sanskrit; he mastered the Hindi language; he is acknowledged as one of the fathers of the modern Bengali literature. His works were so extraordinarily popular that they brought him, it is said, almost a fabulous income. What then is the test of genius? Genius evinces itself in two ways—firstly, in the ability to address itself to tasks that the average man pronounces impossible;

secondly, in the capacity to adjust itself to diverse circumstances or situations and to receive light and imbibe life from all directions. Vidyasagar, who possessed both these capacities to an uncommon degree, proved himself a savant among savants, a counsellor among counsellors, and yet a child among children. With little ones, as they frisked about like lambs on the meadows, he would join with all the glee of childhood. This is a most winning feature of true greatness. It has similarly been said of Rajah Rammohan Roy that he would play and amuse himself with children by taking turns with them in swinging on a cradle. Vidyasagar, the play-mate of children, was the trusted counsellor of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province—not the kind of counsellor that is but a gramophone repetition of the original, but a counsellor of the stoutest individuality. He took no note of mere position; he valued the spirit within rather than the sheath, the man rather than the rank. Once the Lieutenant-Governor sent word to Vidyasagar that he desired to see him. The

messenger said that the big *Sahib* wanted him at his residence, as he proposed to make his acquaintance. And what was Vidyasagar's unfaltering reply? "I believe that the distance between Belvedere and my house is not longer than the distance between my house and Belvedere!" As he rightly held, if a man affects superiority, simply because he has been raised high by a mere turn of fortune, then you should, in an unmistakable manner, declare yourself his equal.

Lastly, there was no end of attractiveness in Vidyasagar's magnificent personality. The innate goodness and the intrinsic worth in him elicited esteem and admiration on all hands. As Carlyle has observed, keep the magnet here, place the needle against it there, heap any amount of rubbish in between; and yet the needle cannot but be drawn to the magnet. The tenderness of his heart went out in keenest sympathy to the needy, the sorrowing, the suffering of all races—indeed, of all species. The sight of a calf feelinglessly kept from its mother's milk, the dumb creature thus starved for the benefit of its

human master, drove Vidyasagar to the vow that thence-forward he would not touch the milk of a cow. In a world content with conventional conduct, this may look like fanaticism; but it really argues that spiritual sensitiveness which is alive to the reality of things. He once attended upon a friend of his attacked with cholera; and he nursed the patient with such close personal attention as, at times, even to remove the excreta with his own hands. On another occasion, the son of a friend whom he visited, brought him some sweet-meats to eat. The boy had a touch of leprosy. But Vidyasagar accepted the refreshments with affection and partook of them without hesitation. All the while, his brother, Pundit Sambhu Chandra Vidyaratna, was making signs to him against eating the confections, lest he should catch the contagion. On being subsequently questioned by his brother on the subject, he replied, "Suppose, Sambhu, you yourself were that leper and you brought me the sweet-meats, could I have the heart to decline them?" On a certain day, during

a walk with some friends, he was overtaken by a heavy shower of rain. Just then, an old acquaintance of the Pundit invited him to a seat in the carriage in which he was driving; but Vidyasagar declined the offer, saying, 'The rain is pelting; the carriage may be tempting; but the spirit is unwilling, since the heart would not be separated from these friends.' Thus he made no distinction between man and man, between kinsman and stranger, between countryman and alien. To view all with equal fellow-feeling as our own—that is a great lesson which every one of us has to learn.

'Small souls enquire, belongs this man  
To our own place or class or clan?  
But larger-hearted men embrace  
As brothers all the human race.'

It is because we disown this heaven-established relationship between all the members of the race, that a whole brood of apathies and animosities lift their hydra-head amidst us. But Vidyasagar had this attractiveness of a winning personality to an extraordinary degree; and all sections of the

community looked up to him for aid and advice, inspiration and guidance. Because he was prepared to embrace the lowly but pass by the haughty, befriend the depressed but leave alone the self-sufficient, he could command the universal confidence and esteem of all those that came into close contact with him. Thus in all ages a great life has been a centre of gravity, and a noble heart a shrine for pilgrimage.

In conclusion, what is it, in the main, that constitutes true greatness? A great man sees much farther, feels much stronger, and builds much surer, than those around him; and hence the fruitful results of his life always surprise others both as to their measure and as to their quality. Hence some would place these great men in a class by themselves, meriting the ordinary man's admiration but forbidding his imitation. We shall, however, accept the conviction of those teachers—and they are neither few nor unimportant—who have declared that, if we truly love and revere a great person, one sure result will be that we shall,

in some measure, reproduce him, in other words, we shall make a spiritual approximation to him. If, in this faith, we earnestly endeavour to follow, however haltingly, in the footsteps of a Vidyasagar and prayerfully seek to live the truth that he saw and enjoyed, then will gradually spring up in us new powers and fresh faculties, whereby we can, however partially, convince the world that the worthies of our race have not lived in vain; since at least a part of their spirit—that is, of their real self, survives in us and grows from generation to generation. May gracious Heaven so ordain it even for our eternal weal!

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## IV

PUNDIT ISWARA CHANDRA VIDYASAGAR.

(1914)

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Emerson has said, 'Every man is a quotation from all his ancestors.' That is to say, every man has in him the spirit that lived in and animated his ancestors. Every man is a reproduction, so to speak, a reincarnation, of the immortal part of the life of his predecessors. That is particularly so in the case of those who leave behind rich legacies of precept and example—of informing thought, of noble sentiment, of an uncompromising sense of duty, of an unflinching resoluteness of purpose and of a fruitful life of faith and action. Vidyasagar, like every other great personality, must be reproduced in us. We must become, each one of us, in some real measure, a quotation, a reproduction, of his life.

It is impossible, however callous they may be, that the life of a remarkable person like

Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar should fail of some degree of wholesome influence upon the lives of his successors within the circle even of those that might, honestly or prudently, join issue with him upon some of the most vital principles of his life—some degree of influence, limited though to the extent of persuading them to feel that a life thus spent in the service of humanity would be the life desirable even for themselves. The line of activity might not be the same. The field of operation might vary. But the life of a great man ought to be a source of perennial inspiration, if not to rival his fame, at any rate to emulate his spirit. Even as, surrounded by a vast desert of sands, the little oasis sends out its refreshing streams over far distant miles, so the life of a great man cannot but shed its genial influence upon numerous, remote minds, be they ever so commonplace.

The life of Vidyasagar ought to create some noble impulses in every Indian—aye, in every human—heart. That which most appeals to us is his advocacy of the neglected—

shall I say, down-trodden?—Hindu widow. His son, Nabin Chandra Banerjea, elected, of his own accord, to marry a widow. But as in so many instances within our own knowledge, a prophet's proclamation of peace and progress is somehow too often believed by those nearest to him to be meant for the whole world excluding, of course, his own kith and kin. And so it was in this case, too. The household was all in consternation. Relations and friends threatened to desert at once. Even Vidyasagar's brother, Pundit Sambhu Chandra Vidyaratna, wrote, praying him to dissuade the son from venturing upon the hazardous act. But the reply was as decisive as it was characteristic. 'The widow marriage movement is the greatest thing I have attempted and achieved. My son is an adult and is in full possession of his senses. He has voluntarily chosen to carry relief to a widowed heart and, in so doing, has done me an honour that I immensely value. If, after having bestowed all my time, energy and resources upon that sacred cause, I should resist or recede when it came to the turn of

my own son, how would it be possible for me thereafter to lift my head again before the children of men or to enjoy anything like peace of mind? If it were yet demanded, I should be willing to give up my life also for the cause in addition to what all I have given already. If relations and friends hold off, neither Nabin nor I shall feel it a calamity. The cause must prevail, be the consequences what they may.' Such was Vidyasagar's decisive answer to his brother's dissuasive remonstrances. Indeed, the espousal of the cause of Hindu widow-marriage and the attainment of success in it to an unexpected degree, was the greatest achievement of his life with all its multifarious activities. This, because it was not merely a revolt against what Shelley has called the hood-winked Queen of Slaves—Custom, but also the championship of a cause which the Hindus had, either helplessly or culpably, though with a burning sense of the evil, neglected for centuries together. The true test of a man of feeling is this, that he turns to, and takes up, worthy causes which time has thrown into the

background and custom has ruled out with blind authority. It is the glory of Vidya-sagar that he made the widow's cause his own, not in anything like the mood of Hamlet's exclamation,

‘The time is out of joint : cursed spite,  
That ever I was born to set it right !’,

but with the true heroic sense that his strength, his honour, nay, the very justification for his life, lay in thus espousing this all too forlorn cause. Many there be who are always prepared and even eager to smile upon a cause which, as Bunyan would say, ‘walks in silver slippers’; but few, alas, the born heroes who give their willing and unsparing services to a cause which ‘goes in rags,’ to use again the language of that immortal writer. Foreign travel, as a friend of mine wrote to me some time back, is a question that has been solved. It is the prospective economic gain that has overridden all scruples there. But the widow-marriage movement is not a paying concern. It is not a cause to take up which is to strike

upon an unexplored mine of wealth. Rather is it a cause that invariably brings with it the stigma of ostracism and ignominy, and at times even personal violence and mortal danger. We who in these days complaisantly attend a widow-marriage celebration and are too prone to think that we have discharged a laudable duty by bestowing a smile and 'chucking out' a few rupees—we can ill understand the measure of opposition which the great pioneers had to overcome or the degree of calumny which they had to endure. To use a well-known phrase, the Pelion of custom piled upon the Ossa of ignorance—these stood as obstacles insuperable to all but the soaring spirit of Vidyasagar. His was a pre-eminent type of heroism when he gave, not leisured attention, but lifelong allegiance to this noble cause more than to any other; and that at a time when the very mention of it would sound as rank blasphemy in ears orthodox and ears polite. These all were arrayed in opposition against that single soul. And yet, *Athanasius contra mundum*, he devoted to the

practical solution of the problem years and years of unmitigated anxiety and unsparing labour. Far from merely speaking well of its principle with some professions of sympathy and then turning away from it with the complacent feeling that he had done his best for it, he put his own shoulder to the wheel and persisted till the upset chariot was restored to its position and set in motion. Such is the persistence of genius; and even as the path of duty is the way to glory, such a pioneer genius alone is rightly, because rightfully, celebrated 'with honour, honour, honour, honour to him, eternal honour to his name.' Surely, it is not the man who makes a comfortable enough voyage in a great Atlantic steamer but Columbus, hurled and tossed about in his little, fragile frigate upon the inhospitable waves, that is acclaimed from all lips as possessing the heart and the soul of a hero.

Michael Madhusudan Dutt, it is reported, told his wife, as she complained of her low purse one precarious day, that, belonging though to a different creed, he had applied

for help—and history knows with what abundant response—to a man who had the sober, unflinching wisdom of an ancient *rishi*, the warm, overflowing affection of an Indian mother and the thorough practical energy of an Englishman. Yes; Vidyasagar was a born prince among men who did combine in himself the triple virtue of the eye that could see, the heart that could feel and the will that could work. And he became so devoted to the cause of the widow, even because he possessed, as others did not possess, alike the insight which discerned the consequences and the sympathy which realised the misery along with the courage which was resolved to fight the good fight.

It is said that on a memorable occasion, when two hostile camps were engaged in a battle and bullets were flying all around and the soldiers were falling in numbers, a young man, all of a sudden, left his ranks and went forward, nobody knew whither. It, at first, looked as though he was making up to the enemy like a deserter. But it was soon observed that he was hurrying up to a poor



widowed woman that had somehow got involved in the fray. He led her by the hand out of the scene of danger. And behold ! The two armies at once stopped fire ; arms were laid down ; souls went up in adoration ; and one unanimous hallelujah of praise expressed the sympathy and appreciation of the hosts. Similarly, between the conservative that wanted to keep her down and the progressive that would not go beyond feeling for her, there remained the poor helpless Hindu widow the victim of a feelingless tragedy. And Vidyasagar steps between them and effects her rescue ! Peace, it has been said, hath her victories no less renowned than war ; and it is the signal triumphs, the noble trophies, of peace that stand out and shine forth as lasting monuments, as immortal memorials, when empires conquered by the sword have vanished and leave not a wrack behind ! Vidyasagar has reared for himself such a monument of glory as will endure even after generals that won mighty fields and orators that charmed listening senates will have been swallowed up in oblivion. His name

will abide so long as sympathy is valued, so long as love is enshrined, so long as noble deeds are exalted, so long as heroism is revered with the homage of a reverent heart. Once again be it repeated, Vidyasagar is dear to us ; not mainly for his scholarship or his educational efforts, but because he threw himself into the vortex of struggle, prepared to be drowned if he could not combat the eddy. It is such a one that has in him the true mettle of a hero. The more neglected, the more spited, the more slandered the man—the greater the sternness, the firmer the resolution, the securer the purpose of the true hero. And whether it be the crippled lamb (as in the well-known story about Buddha)\* or the oppressed slave or the depressed panchama or the hapless widow or the homeless orphan, he who takes up the cause of sorrow and suffering, in the spirit of Buddha, and gathers the afflicted to his bosom and rejoices in the heart and in the soul that he has been privileged thus to serve,—he is a true hero. As a certain Urdu

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\* See pp. 175-76.

poem has it, blows not the flower for its own pleasure, flows not the stream for its own benefit, spreads not the tree for its own comfort, stands not the mountain for its own majesty ; but in God's world every good thing lives for the happiness of others. The truth is amply illustrated in the lives of great men that life is meant, not for self-exhaustion, but as a source of strength to the whole of humanity. And we that revere the name of Vidyasagar and other national heroes, shall we not derive real strength and inspiration from the lives of these great men? As we learn from Emerson, the true test of admiration is reproduction ; and this great man will have been truly admired only when his spirit is reproduced in our humble lives. The name of Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar—the sage who brought illumination into darkened quarters, the philanthropist who gave his vital substance for the redress of want and woe, the reformer who embraced the forgotten and forlorn cause, the hero who carried into every earnest life the message of righteousness and true progress—shall live

embalmed in the grateful memories of whole generations, while his example vivifies their entire lives. To this end and in this spirit, may I be permitted, in closing, to appeal to the scores of young men here before me, to take care to see that the name of Vidyasagar shall not be a mere sound that somehow produces itself once a year but a living, inspiring voice that holds for itself an oracular place in their hearts and lives and to plead that they may, likewise, enshrine in affectionate remembrance every good man and true who by his life-work, has earned a place in the hierarchy of the nation-builders? God's blessings be with you all!

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## V

RAO BAHADUR K. VIRESALINGAM PANTULU.

(1)

(1910)

Our venerated president, Pantulu Garu, is an institution by himself. He is a host in one. Again, he is the hint, the type, the ideal and the inspiration of what humanity ought to be and can be. Standing before him, I feel like standing before a mighty river or a lofty mountain that reveals the hidden possibilities and suggests the inner promise of men as their counterparts. Now I feel as the ancients felt when they heard the God-inspired, God-intoxicated sages speak. His words come, as from a hidden source, carrying with them a convincing power; not the words of one who has merely learnt

\* A fragment of a vote of thanks on presiding at a public meeting (9-7-10).

the 'cunning' of weaving fine phrases but words fused, vitalised and sent forth as a fresh life-current from the heart of one who has lived his life as ever under the great Task-master's eye. In his case it is true that the word is the man incarnate. It is the mirror of the life he has been living. His is the voice of a being from on high that not merely persuades and convinces but captivates and regenerates. The characteristic peculiarity of this hero is a directness of utterance as of aim and action, potent in influence and rich in benevolence all his own. His gift to us, his admirers, is, not the value of his teaching, not even the worth of his action, but the priceless boon of his noble life. Our fit thanks, therefore, to him are, not the tribute of our admiration, not even the homage of our gratitude, but the offering of our lives to the great cause dear to him. Shall we make that offering now? And may kind Heaven consecrate the offering with His blessing!

Sisters and Brethren,

According to the Calendar in vogue among us, it is four years since that thrice-solemn day—the day of anguish with the tear-filled eye and yet the day of trust with the prayerful heart—when the grace-gifted soul that made this town, this district, aye, the *Andhradesa* radiant with the example and fruitful with the benevolence of a life lived under the ‘witness’ of the Supreme Judge and devoted to the glory of the Sovereign Lord, concluded the pilgrimage here below and was translated, as we believe, to a higher—serener and holier—plane in the vast Hereafter. The hoary custom is, indeed, a very wholesome practice, which, in this country, enjoins on the survivors the sacred duty of recalling and re-cherishing the hallowed memories of the revered dead, once a year. This sanctified duty it is that we are met here this evening to discharge in the true reverent spirit.

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\* Based on the opening and closing speeches, as President, at the fourth Anniversary celebration at Rajahmundry (29-5-23).

If I may, for a couple of minutes, dwell on an aspect purely personal of this celebration, I shall observe that for me, who had the privilege of a somewhat close relationship with the departed leader during the latter part of that eventful career, this duty of recollecting and reflecting on the outstanding excellences of the great life is one not of annual recurrence alone. It is a duty, a profitable duty, and a privilege, a precious privilege, of weekly renewal. Some of you may remember that it was on a Tuesday—27-5-19—that honored Pantulu Garu passed into the peace of the faithful. That day of the week is for me replete with profound associations. For it was, again, on a Tuesday, some months later—30-9-19—that he for whom I have always cherished even higher esteem, my ever-revered *Guru Mahasaya*, Pundit Sivanath Sastri, entered into the joy of the selfless. Likewise, it was on a Tuesday, fourteen years earlier, that she, who has been for me ‘the fount of deathless love’—my mother, was received into the bosom of ‘the Divine



Mother. With these tender reminiscences crowding in upon the mind every Tuesday morning, the soul reverently bows before the Father of all spirits, to tender the devoutest homage of thankfulness and to supplicate the purest benediction of grace. I believe every human life which is not an aimless drift, is blessed with similar aids to moral growth and guides to spiritual advancement. And with these invigorating sentiments of gratitude and of reverence, animating and unifying our hearts on this occasion, we are met, to contemplate—to render thanks for and to receive strength from—a life of such rare excellence—of uncommon worth and of unsurpassed virtue, a life ever actuated with a vivid sense of duty, ever quickened with a healthy impulse of sympathy, and ever inspired with a wholesome breath of devotion.

Notwithstanding a strong inclination to dwell intently on the details of a fascinating story, time limits us to a few of its salient features. The first noteworthy characteristic, to my understanding, is that this unique career maps itself out as one connected

whole, with no breaks or voids ; it is one ceaseless course—one perennial current—of exertion and achievement. As we pass it in review, we cannot trace back to a period when Pantulu Garu was not consciously pursuing a selfless end. Even in the prime of life, as Wordsworth says of ‘ the Happy Warrior,’ he would seem to have comprehended ‘ his trust’; to which he kept ‘ faithful with a singleness of aim ’ to the very close. In the multifarious tasks of real life, he ‘ wrought upon the plan which pleased his boyish thought’. Whatever the secular occupations engaging his attention, whatever the local changes in the field of work employing his energies, whatever the extraneous form adopted by his master-motive for its expression, the one enduring purpose—the one absorbing concern—of the life was self-realisation through disinterested service for the common weal. Witness that anxious watch—that scrupulous care—against waste or misuse, with which he fixed his interests, filled up his time, regulated his engagements and husbanded his resources. Thus alone—and no otherwise

—could he muster the strength, in spite of a frail frame racked by chronic asthma, to turn out that weighty mass of literary work, at once so varied in content and so superior in quality. And thus alone—and no otherwise—could he store up that very substantial benefaction (more than princely for a humble school-master) which, endowed as a trust, serves as a monumental memorial to that spirit of sagacity and self-denial which makes him kin to Providence. Here was a life led by ‘the will of Heaven’ and used as under ‘the great Task-Master’s eye’. Here was a trusty steward whom the Master at last would hail with, ‘Well done, thou good and faithful servant: enter thou into the glory of the son’.

The second remarkable feature of his life—public or private—was its ‘catholic wholeness’. Its ideal was a full-life, an all-round existence. The essence of what is termed ‘modernism’ consists in how it lays stress upon the value—the significance and the usefulness—of each individual limb and organ, power and faculty, means and opportunity,

and yet how it insists upon—enjoins as a condition precedent to any recognition—the integral relation of the parts with the full organism. The part can, in fact, be apprehended, as it can exist, only in, through and for the whole. Every thing in its place, only that there may be a place for every thing! ‘Autonomy’ for each, only in and for the ‘federation’ of all! This is the right end, as it is the proper method, of genuine democracy. There can be no true progress with its happy harmony of stability and adaptability, variety and homogeneity, liberty and unity, individuality and community, except on this basis. Hence the true—the far-sighted and large-hearted—reformer cannot but be, so to speak, a ‘cosmopolitan’ in conception and appreciation, however constrained by limitations of resources and circumstances to fix the working energies on one or a few of the chief elements of progress. Viresalingam belonged to this noble type of reformers—a type of which Rammohan Roy and, after him, Mahadev Govinda Ranade were such

conspicuous examples. Ranade's Presidential Address at Satara on ' Congress and Conference ' draws pointed attention to this rather neglected subject. " Each concern has to be attended to in its own time and in its own way; but it is the whole collection which makes it a human interest ". And as we renumerate the chief contents of our Pantulu Garu's works and recall the leading incidents of his life, we feel deeply impressed with this comprehensive programme of human uplift and advancement. Every main concern of life—ethical or economic, social or individual, spiritual or secular—claimed his interest and shared in his sympathy. He held that the whole man should move forward. How unlike the bulk of us who call a shibboleth a gospel !

Let us next try to estimate his splendid achievements as a man of letters. Keenly conscious of my own cramping limitations in this respect, I must speak with due reserve. But I do believe that his claim to be venerated as pre-eminently " the Conscript Father " in the common-wealth of Modern Telugu

Literature has long been secure beyond doubt or dispute. In more directions than one, he was the pioneer; and where a predecessor had found the path, he enlarged the domain as few could. The bare volume of his work—the mental and physical exertion it entailed—should reveal in him one true mark of genius—an almost illimitable capacity for arduous labours. In the wide variety of the work produced, in the vast range of the field covered, does he not remain, not only unsurpassed, but even unrivalled? And yet with what free familiarity, with what graceful ease, he moves from subject to subject! Whether it is *Æsop* adopted or *Kalidasa* translated, whether it is a galling satire after *Swift* or a cheering story after *Goldsmith*, whether it is a light farce to raise a laugh or a finished drama to mirror life, whether it is a popular manual for school-use, or a philosophical disquisition for closet-study, whether it is a spirited appeal for the woe-begone widow or an exacting task to ‘complete’ *Chinnayasuri*, the master-mind is manifest everywhere. Again, his style,

lucid yet learned, familiar yet classic, vigorous yet chaste, full-flowing yet self-contained, it is a style all his own. You can at once tell it amidst a dozen varieties. It reminds one of that graphic description of Macaulay's style—Nature cast out a single specimen and then broke the mould. Such was the perfect mastery he acquired over this facile style that, in later years, 'the first draft' was 'the finished copy'. And further still, he made journalism a power for good. That little weekly, the *Vivekavardhani*—how richly it deserved its ambitious name! It was the surging stream with which this Hercules cleansed the Augean stable of the Indian life of his time. It was also a ray of light and a chant of hope which this 'good man of God' carried into the dark retreats and the dreary solitudes of ignorance and despondence. And yet this abundant output, as if from an inexhaustible mine, was meant for neither fame nor profit. It was all an incense of the soul kindled at the shrine of the Divine Inspirer; it was a message of the heart to the fraternity of light-seekers.

In a Luther whose words are half-battles for the true, there is a natural sequence between 'letters' and 'deeds'. The field prepared by the gifted pen is planted with heroic acts. It may not be superfluous to state, as it seems to be at times forgotten, that the movement for the Re-marriage of Hindu Women was but one single—no doubt, the most generous—aspect of a comprehensive scheme of reconstruction; whose true object, as previously pointed out, was 'all-round' reformation. If we can vividly picture to ourselves the official and social life of the times as reflected in *Vyavaharadharma-bodhini* and kindred writings, we shall be able to form a correct estimate of the moral revolution effected in the work-a-day world around us. It was like emerging from the stolid gloom and the stifling air of a den into the cheering light and the refreshing breezes of the open sky. It was a veritable exodus out of Egyptian bondage towards a Promised Land. As descriptive of its great aim may be used the poet's words: ring out the old, ring in the new; ring out the false, ring in



the true. The result was a Paradise Regained; but after what life-and-death grapple with the powers of darkness! Combating corruption, reprehending impurity, condemning dishonesty, rebuking hypocrisy, exposing cant, dispelling ignorance, exorcising superstition, awakening intelligence, encouraging sincerity, inspiring devotion, infusing strength, championing truth, vindicating justice, upholding righteousness—it was altogether a *Kurukshetra* Crusade. It is said that, in those daring days, Pantulu Garu would be seen, all alone, having an evening stroll along the bank of the Godavari. Was it not an instance of ‘like unto like’—of spirit reaching out to spirit in the kinship of power to cleanse and to refresh, to baptise and to bless? Again, as we study the Remarriage Movement, we discover in it a challenge to choose between *Varnasramadharma* and *Manavadharma*, which latter we may re-name, for our present purpose, the *Viresalingadharma*. Of course, the prudent populace will always keep to the well-trodden track; the prophet, even more than the poet,

takes long to find fit audience, though few. So it proved in this instance, too. But Viresalingam came of that heroic, 'thorough-bred' spirit that dares be in the right even without two or three. There was the colossal social problem—the problem of one widow out of every six Hindu women—to be solved. Custom—the religion of unthinking, ease-loving human automatons—had prescribed a solution in the formula, 'with single meal a day her body shall be starved, and with the mark of deformity her forehead shall be carved'. A band of young widows waits on the Sankaracharya of a certain *Mutt*; the *Swami* is just then applying a medicine to his eyes to improve the sight. The visitors say, 'Your Holiness, is there no relief for our miserable lot?' 'None', is the ready reply, 'none; it is your fate'. 'May not, then', enquire the perplexed, 'His Holiness's impaired eyesight be fate, too?' Thus Fate usurps the throne of God; and blind credulity fancies that Nature makes the woman and Fate makes the widow, and the decrees of Fate

are inexorable. Callousness is then construed as kindness; and tyranny is warranted as precaution. But how long, as Sadi asks, can this shop of oppression be 'warm'—can it thrive? God is still in His Heaven; His Spirit descends into the scene of wrong and transmutes the wail of woe into a hymn of benediction. The soul that dwells in a Viresalingam is this 'descent' of the Holy Spirit; it dethrones fate, banishes custom, restores faith, reinstates hope. Thus, once again, our race is taught and trained to build its trust, not only on 'God and godlike men', but also on the godlike in man. Imagination has been happily designated the 'sight' of the heart which can glimpse the glory behind veils of flesh. Endowed with this 'second-sight', as a Michael Angelo can trace the ethereal features of an angel in a shapeless block of marble, a Vidyasagar or a Viresalingam can discover a lovely-wife and a love-laden mother in a love-lorn widow. It is this 'descent'—this *avatarana*—of a new spirit that constitutes an epoch. Thus, for *Andhradesa*, the Heaven-inspired life of our

Pantulu Garu marks the modern epoch :  
 "the new sun rose bringing the new  
 year."

These harbingers of new light have time and again been arraigned as the corrupters of youth. But the truth is that, as the prudent purvey to the present, the faithful sow for the future. Pantulu Garu's devotion to his 'calling' as teacher has to be construed on this 'first principle': the 'seed of men and growth of minds' ever find the best soil in the unsophisticated hearts and the unobsessed heads of the young. Again, as all roads lead to Rome, all studies lead to that *Satyam* which constitutes the substance and the stamina of the universe. Let the quest dive beneath the surface phenomena, and the spirit discovers the bed-rock on which the whole structure of existence is based. Addressing himself, with this lofty purpose, to his duties as the Telugu Pundit in what was the premier Arts College for this region, Pantulu Garu could so train the thoughts and mould the characters of a succession of young men that, for a good many

years, it was a guarantee of genuineness to have been his pupil. Nor was this accomplished at the expense of his purely academic functions. Is it not verified by the best experience on the subject that while your plodding pedagogue who takes his task in the 'journey-man' fashion groans under the burden of courses and curricula, the true teacher, who converts work into worship, elicits the innate aptitudes and evolves the native capacities of his pupils, whose minds thus grow with their exercises and automatically accelerate the pace of progress? For invigorating the intellect, for chastening the impulses, for broadening the outlook, for quickening the sympathies, for arousing the enthusiasm, of the youthful votaries of wisdom, the class-room becomes the temple of Athene, the shrine of Saraswati. Thus he could exalt the Pundit, generally an eye-sore, into a 'cynosure'—a centre of attraction. To whom among the race of Pundits, in preference to him, will the palm of credit for disseminating true culture be awarded by the general 'voice'? And

since he faithfully 'typed' in his life the truths which he taught and thus not only pointed, but also led, the way to soul-stirring goals, he could exercise a wonderful influence—it was a spell cast—upon the more loyal and forward of his students. 'We ran after him like dogs after their master', as one of them was proud to own at a memorial gathering. No doubt, even a Jesus may have a Judas among the chosen twelve; but does not Judas on the 'juniper' confess the 'convicting' power of the Master? For decades to come, therefore, the name of Viresalingam will remain embalmed with the dearest memories in the hearts and homes of a notable band of good men and true, who were privileged to possess in him their life-long 'guide, philosopher and friend.'

The faithfulest of these disciples as, in a very real sense, the aptest of these pupils, was the noble matron who, placing her trusting hands in his, at an age when neither had reached the 'teens', walked with him the pilgrimage of life for over half-a-century.

They had been married, about 1860, as a girl of nine and a boy of twelve. With his uncommonly strong sense of duty, Pantulu Garu early realised his great responsibilities as husband. Undistracted by other demands, neither few nor light, on his time and energies, he personally undertook the task—the 'trying' yet encouraging duty—of educating and training the young wife. Devoted willingness co-operating with cheerful perseverance, the work—no doubt, a prolonged one—progressed happily, so as steadily to establish that marvellous harmony, admired of all, between two spirits that seemed to have been designed to 'supply' each the needs of the other. They realised for themselves, as they represented to others, that ideal of wedded life which Sankaracharya describes in the two golden words, *Sadhvi* and *Vibhu*, illumined with the picturesque comparison of the ornamenting creeper and the sustaining stalk—of charm and strength woven into one beauty. Few have a true conception of how the two grew together—breathed and moved in indivorceable union :

he her guiding genius, she his 'ministering angel'; his the reason ripe, hers the feeling fine—together 'dispensing harvest and sowing the To-be.' Those selfless services, so fertile in human good, which are usually associated with Pantulu Garu, were the fruit of their combined prayer and endeavour. The widow-marriage movement was the issue of their united love—he the catering father, she the fostering mother; the widowed or the destitute that leaned on him as the father nestled in her as the mother. The trust held by the Hitakarini Samaj was, we may note, created during Sree Rajyalakshamma Garu's life-time as joint heritage to posterity. 'What could I have done without her?' he would exclaim, when her dear place by his side became empty. And with the dire calamity when 'the Shadow' wrapped her up in its sable folds with staggering suddenness, the spirit that quailed not at the sight of an enraged world arrayed in opposition, broke down with gnawing anguish. That heart-melting prayer at the *Adya-Sradha*, with its humble accents



of adoration and quivering sobs of supplication, was a confession to God and a discovery to man of that lucent love which filled 'the two-celled heart' now broken in twain. Ever after, the vivid vision of the 'late-lost form' haunted him; and though duty dragged him on, he could not feel again his former self. 'I ask myself in wonder', he says, 'whether I am the same old Viresalingam'. His one dear desire, which deepened with time, was that his ashes should repose by hers; this was his 'farewell' request to his friends at Rajahmundry. Soon after the harrowing bereavement, he designed and constructed that twin-tomb wherein, after eight heart-heavy years, 'God's love' set him by her side again. There is deposited for ever 'the sacred dust', there pervades for ever the fragrant spirit, of this model couple—this paragon of *dampathya*—'re-wed' in the Eternal. For the faith-led pilgrim to the shores of the *Goutami* is there a shrine more hallowed than the *Rajyalakshmeepramadavanam* in the Ananda Gardens?

'Re-wed' in the Eternal; this haunting hope in the Eternal was insistent in Pantulu

Garu during the closing decade. It should, indeed, be recognised of him—in this one respect the oft-instituted comparison between Vidyasagar and Viresalingam does not quite fit in—that religious reorganisation had, from the very beginning, a definite place in his plan of life: ‘what came from Heaven to Heaven by nature clings.’ He was one of the very earliest adherents—and all along an earnest advocate—of the Prardhana Samaj movement. Of his essays and discourses topics relating to Theism constitute no small fraction. The Prardhana Samaj at Rajahmundry has been a congregation of many years’ standing and was at one time very popular. Several of the adjoining Samajes owed their origin or their suggestion to him, chiefly through his admirers. With him, ‘prayer’ was a daily duty. His moral principles were firmly based on, and closely related to, his belief in a Supreme Being, who is our Creator and Ruler, Guide and Friend, Judge and Saviour. This faith was a rich fertiliser of his life. It nerved him to action and bore him up in difficulties. The chief fruit,

however, of this faith, for the most part of life, was the rousing strength of the reformer rather than the serene calm of the devotee. This suggests a side-reference to an exceedingly interesting characteristic of the life-history of that Monotheistic Church of Modern India—the Brahma Samaj; at any rate, as it has manifested itself in our midst. ‘God fulfills Himself in many ways’ to save mankind, not only from the corruption of one good custom, but also from the poverty of the spirit resulting from one monotonous method. The two ways, for our present purpose, in which He may be understood to be fulfilling Himself through this Dispensation are the way of the forceful flow of Truth that drains out falsehood and the way of the gentle diffusion of Grace that subdues strife. If it be permissible thus to contrast the two expressions of one and the same spirit, the distinction may be said to lie between ‘through reform to Brahmaism’ and ‘through Brahmaism to reform’, or between the Brahmaism of reformation and the Brahmaism of regeneration—a heaven established

about us and a heaven evolved within us. It was the Brahmaism of reformation that was the prominent feature of the movement in and around Rajahmundry. Very naturally the Widow-Marriage Association and the Prayer Samaj were 'concomitants'. But the other variety—no doubt, a plant of slower growth and thinner build—of the same species was gently lifting its little head into the sunshine and shower of mercy, elsewhere. It was not so wide-known; but when discovered, it was loved. The two may be stated to have been 'typed' by Pantulu Garu and Bapayya. Hence the meeting of these two devoted souls was the *sangam* of two currents of the Spirit—each 'supplying' and 'replenishing' the other. They discovered, greeted and embraced in each other 'a sincere Theist'—that pregnant phrase of Pantulu Garu's own choice for the common epitaph on the two graves. The subsequent acceptance by Pantulu Garu of what is called the *Amushtanic* mode of life was a natural sequel—certainly not induced but obviously occasioned by this

fellowship. It was natural, again, that after he had taken that decisive step—to him so momentous, so self-vindicating, so soul-satisfying, the majority of his former fraternity should have assumed towards him—consciously—or unconsciously—the mental attitude of “trust, but not love, you less”. ‘What will become of the widow-marriage movement, when you turn an Amushtanic Brahmo?’ enquired some of them. ‘What will become of the movement, when I die?’ was the challenging answer. ‘I have been an *atmavanchaka* (a humiliator of the spirit) hitherto,’ was his contrite confession. *Visva-sodharmamoolamhi*: planted on fidelity to the ever-faithful One, the spirit blooms into a wonder and a glory. This culminating covenant of a fidelity was the consummation of spiritual constancy—the sublimation of spiritual chastity. It was the soul taking the thrice-holy ‘veil’ of devotion to worship the Lord and do His will by ‘the might of simple truth with grace divine imbued’. ‘Thou art not a child of time but an offspring of Eternal Prime,’ was

the benediction then pronounced. Then was the loyal servant awarded that Charter of Celestial Rights which points the path and enjoins admission to 'the Eternal City built for the perfected spirits of the just'. Then was the heart attuned to that 'Eternal Harmony whereto the worlds beat time'. Then was the soul blessed with that 'Peace of God'—that heavenly 'Concord and Charity' whose ministering mission is 'transcendent over time, unbounded by place'. Grace accept him, Love receive him!

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Contents	Convocation Address	(1924)	(1923)
vi	17	Sir	Mr.
82	12	required	require
124	18	observe	observed
134	16	with	to
147	17	now, Sir	now. Sir
195	10	an	of an
310	heading	(1923)	(1924)
314	13	awaken ever	ever awaken
315	15	Thee but	Thee ; but
388	3	cord	chord
390	1	wane	wave
406	20	' constallation '	' costellation '
426	6	cursed	Oh ! cursed
447	9	automatous	automatons
448	21	lovely-wife	lovely wife
456	9	fulfills	fulfils





## CORRECTIONS.

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Page	Line	<i>For</i>	<i>Read</i>
53	28	God-made	God made
107	20 & 21	<i>(No new para ; to run on.)</i>	
132	3	<i>gurvanganagamanam</i>	<i>gurvanganagamam</i>
152	13	tail	trunk
154	9	bring	bear
169	15	their	there
171	9	elevation. If	elevation, if
180	16	documents	descendants
304	17	tume	tune
332	8	Therefor	Therefore
340	3	love	life
371	1	exaltations	exhalations
430	20	have vanished	vanish
440	21	turned	termed
457	23	<i>Amushtanic</i>	<i>Anushtanic</i>
458	9	<i>do.</i>	<i>do.</i>
458	18	of a fidelity	of fidelity

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